WORLD / A26

Democratic White House bets make history debating with voters via YouTube

NEWS / A2

19 senators ask court to allow Trillanes to attend sessions

NEWS / A8

Environmentalists: Let Reyes stay until trees project completed

WORLD / A25

58 Indons die in landslides after floods

NEWS/ A22

Congress to push bill cutting cost of medicines

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, July 25, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 227 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Sunday Inquirer Magazine No. 1, says Nielsen survey

SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE IS THE NO. 1 weekend supplement in the country, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Nielsen's nationwide survey, conducted in the first quarter of 2007, showed that 50 percent of respondents who read a weekend supplement the past week said SIM was their magazine of choice.

The survey estimated that SIM had 553,000

SUNDAY/ A21

Produce Jonas on Friday, SC orders AFP

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS ORDERED the Armed Forces to produce Jonas Burgos despite the military's insistence it was not holding the missing activist.

The tribunal's first division chaired by Chief Justice Reynato Puno issued a writ of habeas corpus in response to a petition filed by Jonas' mother, Edita Burgos, and ordered Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and the other respondents, who included President Macapagal-Arroyo, to present Jonas before the Court of Appeals in Manila on Friday morning, and to explain why he should continue to be detained.

It directed Court of Appeals Presiding Justice Ruben Reyes to immediately raffle Jonas' case among the court's justices, and said the designated justice should hear the case on Friday and submit a report to the tribunal after handing down his decision.

Copies of the writ of habeas corpus were released to the media only yesterday, but it was dated July 16—the first day of the summit initiated by the Supreme Court to come up with solutions to the unabated extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances.

Said the high court's first division: "You (respondents) or your duly authorized representatives are hereby re-

PRODUCE / A10

High court defers action on TRO against terror law

By Leila B. Salaverria

TOP OFFICIALS OF THE EXECUTIVE branch and the military have been ordered by the Supreme Court to comment within 10 days on petitions seeking to nullify the controversial antiterror law.

But the high court deferred action on the request of the petitioners that a temporary restraining order be imposed on the implementation of the law, the Human Security Act (HSA) of 2007, while deliberations were ongoing.

"The court required the respondents to comment within 10 days [from receipt of the tribunal's directive]. No TRO," Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez told reporters yesterday.

According to Marquez, it was the high court en banc that tackled the

HIGH COURT/ A21

Villar: GMA a lame duck

She will definitely go in 2010, says Palace

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac

SENATORS YESTERDAY slammed President Macapagal-Arroyo for sounding insecure in her State of the Nation Address about her "lame-duck" status in the next three years.

"She's being too defensive about her lame-duck status, I don't think it was necessary for her to make those statements, much less challenge us," Senate President Manuel Villar said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

In her address on Monday at the opening of the 14th Congress, the President said: "I am not an obstacle to anyone's ambition. But make no mistake. I will not stand idly by when anyone gets in the way of the national interest and tries to block the national vision. From where I sit, I can tell you, a President is always as strong as she wants to be."

Villar said Ms Arroyo should be more

VILLAR/ A21

VILLAR: There are a lot of interpretations when she [GMA] says someone could get in the way. We are an independent Senate, it's not always possible to say "yes, yes" to what she wants.

INQUIRER PHOTO

A PRAYERFUL PAUSE for President Arroyo before going into the 26th Neda board meeting at the Palace on Tuesday. Ms Arroyo and her economic managers approve the proposed 2008 national budget of more than a trillion pesos, which will be submitted next month to Congress.

LYN RILLON

Int'l rating firm on Sona infra projects: Where's cash?

By Michelle V. Remo and Michael Lim Ubac

WHERE'S THE MONEY?

An international credit rating agency yesterday doubted the government capacity to finance the infrastructure projects that President Macapagal-Arroyo enumerated in her State of the Nation Address (Sona) on Monday.

"In the absence of a significant improvement in tax collection, it will not be possible for the Philippine government to implement its ambitious and much-needed infrastructure development program," Fitch Ratings said in a statement.

"That, in turn, would jeopardize the country's medium-term economic growth outlook and, ultimately, its sovereign credit worthiness," it said.

But Malacañang said there was enough money to fund the projects.

At a press briefing, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the "Sona projects" had already been incorporated in the proposed 2008 budget of P1.227 trillion,

INT'L RATING/ A6

Palace proposes P1.227-trillion budget for 2008

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY APproved a proposed P1.227-trillion budget for 2008, up from this year's P1.136 trillion.

The proposed budget will be submitted to the House of Representatives not later than Aug. 24.

"The focus of the budget would be on infrastructure, edu-

PALACE/ A6

Senators see red over blue ribbon panel chair

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE NEWLY FORMED SENATE MAjority bloc led by Senate President Manuel Villar was in disarray yesterday over a disagreement on whether an administration or opposition senator should chair the blue ribbon committee—the powerful panel that investigates government irregularities.

The three opposition senators in the majority bloc—Senators Francis Escudero, Alan Peter Cayetano and Jinggoy Estrada—want one of their own to head the blue ribbon committee while the nine administration senators in the alliance are pushing for the retention of Sen. Joker Arroyo as chair.

Alan Cayetano was being floated as a compromise candidate for the post but the Arroyo administration, wary of his anti-Arroyo rhetoric during his term in the House of Representatives, flatly rejected him.

Sen. Loren Legarda, one of eight opposition senators who did not vote for Villar, said it was a pity that the majority coalition would decide the committee leaderships, including the blue ribbon committee.

"The blue ribbon is at the heart of the fiscalizing nature of the Senate and this should be in the hands of a real opposition," said Legarda.

After being elected Senate Presi-

SENATORS/ A21

'Practical' solution for ex-future nurses

By Jerome Aning

WHAT DOES ONE DO WITH HALF of the 78,000 nursing graduates who are expected to flunk the licensure examination administered last month?

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion wants to give them a "practical" fallback position.

Brion is proposing that the flunkers be given the option to become "practical nurses," those who

PRACTICAL/ A10

GOVERNORS' CONFAB: Topping the agenda of the first organizational meeting of the League of Provinces of the Philippines is the resolution supporting the appointment of Lito Atienza as environment secretary. From left, Interior Undersecretary Tony Pet Albano, Governors Gwen Garcia of Cebu, Grace Padaca of Isabela, Raymund Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, Dax Cua of Quirino and Ed Panlilio of Pampanga. Misamis Occidental Gov. Loreto Ocampos is the league's new president.

EDWIN BACASMAS

7th Harry Potter book is fastest selling in history

NEW YORK—THE NUMBERS ARE NEW, the story old: No book has sold like "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows."

And J.K. Rowling is already the first billionaire author.

The seventh and final volume in the Harry Potter series has become the fastest selling book in history, with more than 11 million copies sold during the first 24 hours in three markets alone—Britain, Germany and the United States.

Lisa Holton, president of Scholastic Trade and Book Fairs, likened the weekend excitement in the United States to the hysteria that greeted the Beatles' first

7TH HARRY/ A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Second FRONTPAGE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2007

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EZ2 SIX DIGIT

29 29 | 4 4 3 8 8 8

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening

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(All in exact order)

6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN

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P4,907,503.80

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy

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Senate roils over Trillanes

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE SENATE SPENT MOST OF ITS SECOND SESSION day yesterday debating a proposed resolution calling on the courts to allow the detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV to attend Senate sessions and perform his duties as an elective official.

While support for the resolution proposed by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. has crossed party lines, strong opposition from a few senators led to prolonged discussion.

As of yesterday, only four of the 22 senators have not signed the petition—administration senators Joker Arroyo, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Richard Gordon and Juan Miguel Zubiri from the majority bloc.

Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Gregorio Honasan, who are also in the majority bloc, have expressed support for the resolution but with reservations.

Enrile, who said he signed it as a gesture of goodwill to the minority bloc, said he did not want the resolution to be used as part of Trillanes' legal arguments before the court.

Trillanes, a former Navy lieutenant, was elected senator while detained and on trial for the crime of coup d'etat for involvement in the July 2003 failed coup, also known as the Oakwood mutiny.

Enrile questioned why none of his Senate colleagues moved to support him when, while an incumbent senator, he was arrested in 2001 for allegedly instigating the siege of Malacañang by supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"I don't know about that. There's no parity of popularity. He [Trillanes] appears to have gained popular support for his cause," Pimentel replied.

Enrile, citing the implications of the resolution, moved to postpone the nominal voting to the following day, so that the records will reflect the vote of each senator.

Honasan took offense at a portion of the resolution citing his exoneration in the same coup d'etat case being faced by Trillanes and other junior officers.

Honasan, who was recently cleared by the Department of Justice of involvement in the mutiny, said his circumstances were different from that of Trillanes although he empathized with latter.

Pimentel agreed to delete the part that read, "whereas the charges against the alleged leader of the Oakwood mutiny, Sen. Gregorio Honasan, have been dropped by the Department of Justice."

The Makati Regional Trial Court has already twice rejected Trillanes' petition for bail. Coup d'etat is a non-bailable offense.

Trillanes has a pending omnibus petition before the court asking for, among other things, special leave to attend Senate functions, access to the media, and a workstation in his jail cell.

Arroyo took to the floor, decrying what he said was the Senate's interference in the judiciary. He said Trillanes' lawyer should work instead to reduce the charges against the senator so he can be allowed bail.

"I have expressed sympathy for Trillanes... but he can't use the Senate as a vehicle instead of the courts," said Arroyo.

He cited the Supreme Court decision disallowing then congressman Romeo Jalosjos, a convicted child rapist, from attending sessions of the House of Representatives.

$250-M SCAM

Forex firm's local execs face suit

By Tina G. Santos

A GROUP OF INVESTORS WILL FILE TODAY a class suit against the incorporators of Performance Investment Products Corp. (PIPC), a foreign exchange trading firm whose owner has disappeared with at least $250 million of investors' money.

Lawyer John Felipe, counsel for at least five PIPC investors, said they would file charges of "large-scale syndicated estafa" against Michael H.K. Liew, the Singaporean owner of PIPC, and Cristina Gonzalez-Tuason, the firm's Filipino general manager.

Felipe has refused to name his clients, saying "they want privacy and peace for their families."

"But they will come out at the proper time," said Felipe, who was interviewed at the National Bureau of Investigation anti-organized crime division where he and his clients were putting together their documents yesterday.

"There are around 2,000 to 3,000 people who invested money with PIPC, so we expect more to come forward and file a complaint," Felipe said.

One of Felipe's clients, a thirty-something businessman, said that PIPC investors included expatriate executives and families with their own businesses.

"There are also those who came from the Visayas and I know one who came from a very influential family," the investor said. "That's why they were embarrassed to come out in the open."

The PIPC case first came to light when Tuason wrote the NBI on July 19, seeking help from the Interpol in tracing the whereabouts of Liew, the owner of Performance Investments Products Corp. in the British Virgin Islands (Performance Investment, BVI).

Liew is also president of PIPC, the local subsidiary of Performance Investment, BVI.

In her letter, Tuason said Liew had "unlawfully taken the money" of Performance Investments "to the grave prejudice of its investors," including herself.

Earlier last week, the firm's investors were told that Liew had absconded with their money and that the bank accounts which held their investments had been emptied and closed.

Felipe said Tuason was liable because she was the firm's local incorporator.

"By filing a complaint with the NBI, Tuason was making it appear that she was also a victim. I don't know if that's her diversionary tactic but we believe that she is also a suspect," Felipe said.

"She was pointing at Liew as the one who salted away the funds. For all we know, Michael Liew doesn't even exist," he said.

The thirty-something complainant claimed to have heard that Tuason was encouraging other investors to shell out more money to come up with from $200,000 to $250,000 which they would ostensibly need to hire a Hong Kong-based lawyer to locate Liew.

The other day, a businesswoman from Makati's Dasmariñas Village showed up at the NBI to file a complaint against Tuason, who she claimed enticed her to invest $20,000 in the company.

Speaking on behalf of his daughter, the complainant's father said that she, "along with several residents and affluent families of Forbes and Dasmariñas," were personally recruited by Tuason.

"[Tuason] really went around, enticing people to invest. Some investors put in $300,000 or $400,000," he said, adding that his daughter came to know Tuason through a friend.

Pursuing Basilan attackers no walk in the park – Esperon

By Christine Avendaño and Inquirer Mindanao

ARMED FORCES CHIEF GEN. HERMOGENES Esperon Jr. said going after the perpetrators of the deadly July 10 attack in Basilan would not be a walk in the park for the military.

He said he has ordered additional forces to be deployed in case the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) makes good its threat to launch retaliatory attacks in Lanao del Norte.

Esperon said the troops were in pursuit of 20 men identified as the ones who killed and mutilated 14 Marines and wounded nine other soldiers during an ambush in Albakar, Basilan, which the MILF has admitted to having staged.

The men are armed with high-powered firearms that include the more than 20 weapons they took from the dead Marines, he told reporters late Monday.

"That's the risk of enforcing this, of doing this," he said of the job facing the 5,000-strong force made up of the military, police and militiamen.

"This is not a walk in the park. We know that, we expect it," he added.

Esperon said the military was not extending the deadline it gave the MILF to surrender the perpetrators, "after all know who they are."

But he said the AFP cannot extend the deadline and leave unpunished those who beheaded and mutilated the Marines.

If there is no punishment for the perpetrators, "they will think that beheading people is perfectly all right," he said.

"This is not to avenge the soldiers but to uphold the very basic right of government to protect its citizens, to uphold the law. We have always believed that punishing the barbaric act does not have to fall within the ambit of the peace process," he said.

Esperon said that if there seemed to be a delay in the strike against the perpetrators, this was because the military was making sure that the targets were identified and located before it moves in.

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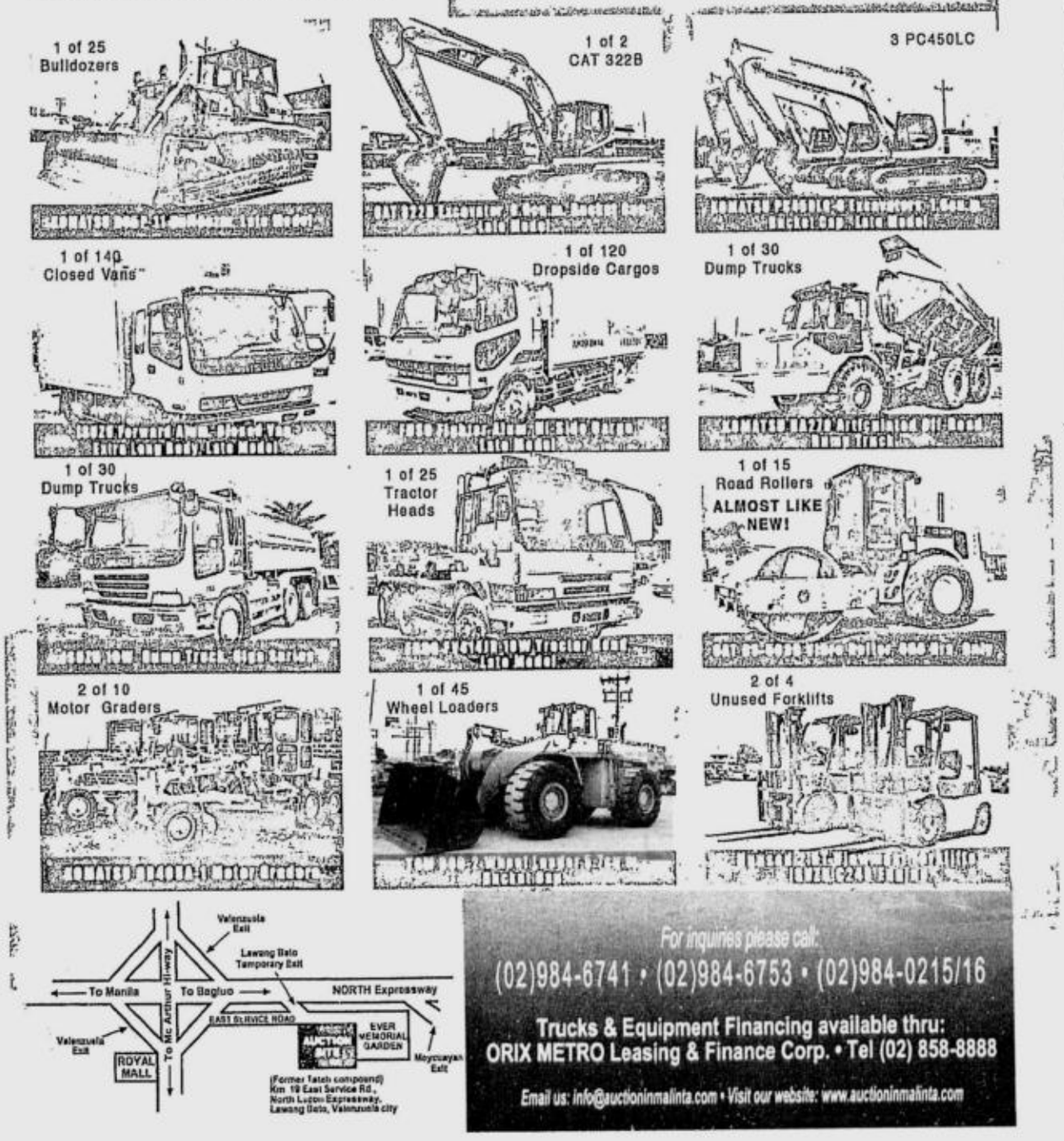

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Garcia: Never say die

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—AFTER FAILING TO WIN THE speakership, Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia has proposed the formation of an independent bloc in the House of Representatives.

At least 25 congressmen, disappointed over Monday's proceedings to pick a new Speaker, had expressed interest in joining such a bloc, which he and Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte planned to put up, Garcia said.

"We will form a group, an independent bloc. We will not be joining the minority or the majority. We will be independent in Congress. Our group will serve as a conscience bloc," he said.

Garcia said he had regrets about the outcome of the fight for the speakership after he did his best but failed because of the way Speaker Jose de Venecia and his supporters railroaded the proceedings.

He denied withdrawing from the race or refusing to be nominated. He said De Venecia and his followers had exerted all efforts to see to it he would not be nominated.

He said that after De Venecia's nomination was seconded, the nomination process was closed and the voting started.

He said a fellow Cebuano congressman, Antonio Cuenco, had turned against him by nominating De Venecia after Cuenco had committed his support to Garcia.

Garcia said Cuenco visited him at his Manila office twice to express support for his speakership bid.

So when Cuenco stood up to nominate De Venecia, Garcia said it was "treachery."

Cuenco, however, said it was a simple case of "sour grapes" on Garcia's part.

He said Garcia should not blame him for his defeat because it was Garcia's camp that committed mistakes in strategy.

Instead of pushing for a secret balloting, Cuenco said the Garcia camp resorted to questioning the authority of the presiding officer as the House was set to vote for the Speaker.

He said his commitment was to support a secret ballot, not to vote for Garcia. *With a report by Norman Bordadora*

Arroyos went for JDV

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S SONS and brother-in-law in the House of Representatives cast their lot with Speaker Jose de Venecia on Monday's speakership vote despite Ms Arroyo's decision not to publicly support anyone in the battle for the House leadership.

De Venecia ran unopposed in what could be the most contentious speakership election in the history of Philippine politics.

Challenger Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia opted to withhold his nomination when his allies failed to get the rules and amendments they wanted the House to adopt.

"[I] made a personal choice to support Speaker Jose de Venecia. This was made by myself alone without consulting the President in line with her stand to respect the independence of Congress," said the President's eldest son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo. "We also congratulate Rep. Garcia for putting up a valiant fight against SJDV."

He heaved a sigh of relief after the House elected a speaker five hours after the session opened at 10 a.m.

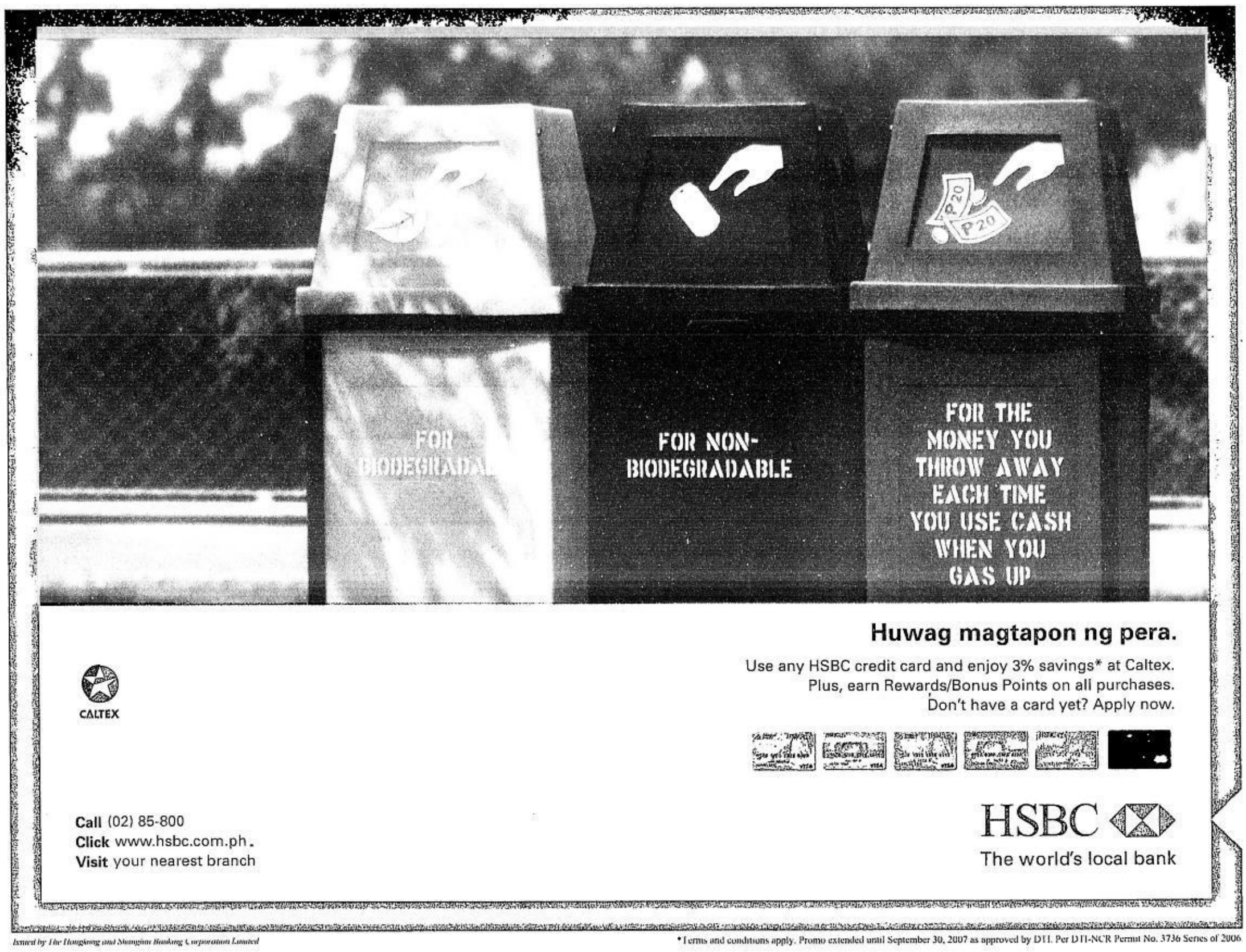
"[Let's] put the speakership fight behind us and support the administration in its goals of providing more development projects, better basic services, more employment and higher income opportunities to our people," he added.

First-termer Camarines Sur Rep. Diosdado "Dato" Arroyo, the President's youngest son, said he'd rather not say whether he had Ms Arroyo's go-ahead to vote for De Venecia or not.

"There was only one candidate nominated for Speaker so it doesn't matter whether I had anyone's blessing or not," the younger Arroyo told the INQUIRER.

Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, brother of First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, did not return the INQUIRER's calls which could have revealed his vote on the speakership.

However, it was the Negros Occidental representative who said in May that the President's party, Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), would be supporting De Venecia's bid for a fifth term as Speaker.



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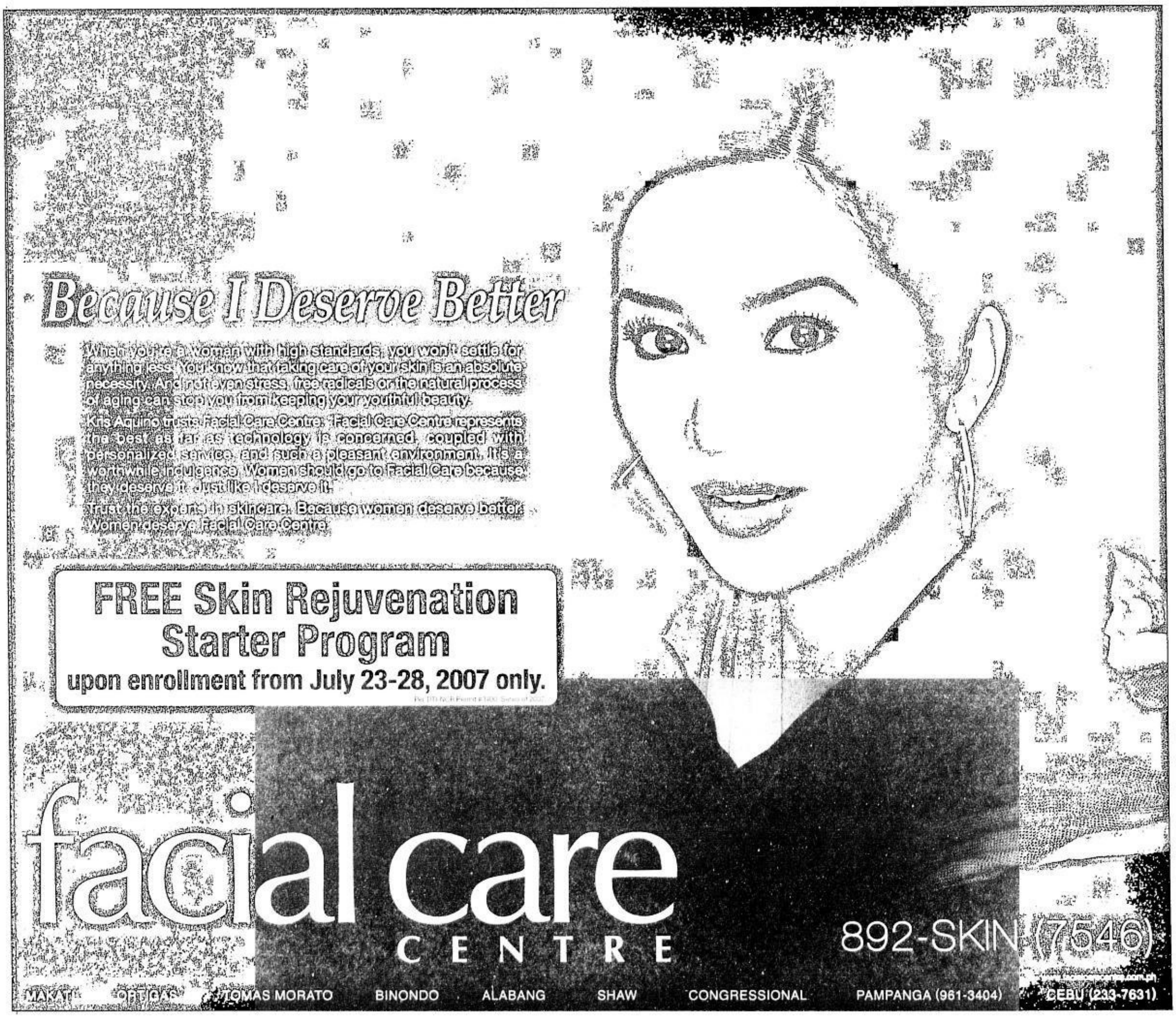

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3 PUP execs to face trial at Sandigan

THE SANDIGANBAYAN HAS JUNKED THE bid of three executives of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines to dismiss the 13 counts of graft cases filed against them 10 years ago for allegedly defrauding the government of over P20 million through anomalous construction projects.

In a 12-page resolution, the antigraft court's Fourth Division said there was enough evidence to support the finding of probable cause against former PUP vice-president for administration Dante Guevarra, ex-administrative officer Augustus Cezar and former accounting division chief Adriano Salvador.

Guevarra is now acting PUP president while Cezar is now vice president for administration. It was not immediately known whether Salvador is still connected with PUP.

Court records showed that the graft cases stemmed from a complaint lodged by PUP faculty members Zenaida Pia and Cresenciano Gatchalian with the Office of the Ombudsman in 1995.

In their complaint, the three were accused of misappropriating P20.9 million worth of surplus construction materials for the construction of eight school buildings in 1989, among others.

The three officials were also accused of allowing the overpayment of P1.107 million in terminal leave benefits to a faculty member and about P1.74 million in technical and supervision fees to 64 employees of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

In asking the court to dismiss the cases, the accused pointed out that Pia and Gatchalian have already desisted from further proceeding with the trial and that the Commission on Audit has reversed its report which the Ombudsman based its findings against them.

They said the COA came out with a subsequent report "practically exonerating" them of the charges.

However, the court pointed out that Pia and Gatchalian's affidavit of desistance was not sufficient cause to dismiss the cases, noting that these involved public funds. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

Corrections

IN THE JULY 19 ISSUE, Dolly Anne Carvajal's "Dollywood" column on Page D4 of the Entertainment section—"Carmina reviews look-alike's sex video"—misspelled the title of a local independent film. The film's title is "Ligaw Liham"—not "Ligaw Lihim."

* * *

IN THE JULY 20 ISSUE, a front-page article—"Boy who saved 4 kids in Pagoda tragedy is 'modern hero'"—misstated the date when the accident happened in Bocaue, Bulacan. The event took place on July 2, 1993—not July 8, 1993.

* * *

IN THE JULY 24 ISSUE, Conrado de Quiros' "There's the Rub" column on Page A10—"Let's join the NPA"—misstated the name of the highest award accorded to a Filipino soldier by the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The highest award given out by the AFP is the Medal of Valor—not the Medal of Honor. The Medal of Honor is given out by the US Congress.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an article on Page A15—"Is GMA stepping down in 2010? Villar, Pangilinan bothered"—misspelled the name of a town in the province of Bulacan. The town's name is Bulacan—not Bulakan.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

Palace proposes P1.227-trillion budget for 2008

From page A1

cation, health, science and technology, including training, housing and salary adjustments," Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said.

Under the proposed budget, the Department of Education will get P145 billion, up from P141 billion; the Department of Public Works and Highways, P93.5 billion from P79.6 billion; Department of National Defense, P56 billion from P55.8 billion; Department of Interior and Local Government, P52.5 billion from P53.2 billion, and Department of Agriculture, P21.7 billion from P18.9 billion.

The allocation for the graft-ridden pork barrel, known as the Priority Development Assistance Fund, will remain at about P4 billion, according to Andaya.

In percentage increases, the biggest gainers are the following:

- National Housing Authority, from P257 million to P5 billion, an increase of 1,847 percent. The additional funding will finance socialized housing projects.
- Department of Science and Technology, from P3.6 billion to P5.5 billion, or an increase of 51 percent. The increase is due to scholarship grants to high school students and loans to college students.
- Department of Health, from P12.29 billion to P15 billion, an increase of 22 percent.
- Department of Public Works and Highways, from P79.63 billion to P93.46 billion, an increase of 17.4 percent.

P30B for salary hikes

Andaya happily announced that next year's budget would have an additional P30 billion for personnel services.

"That represents the full year implementation of our salary increase which will take effect this month—the 10-percent salary increase—so we will carry that over next year, plus an allocation of P11 billion for the implementation of the salary standardization Part 3," he said.

"The other priority of the President is the increase in the salary of our state workers," he said.

"So the initial implementation would be P11 billion. We're looking at a total amount of around P75 million till 2010 in terms of salary increases," Andaya said.

Int'l rating firm on Sona infra projects: Where's the money?

From page A1

up from this year's P1.126 trillion. *(Story below.)*

Andaya and Teves made the announcement following a meeting in which the President and the board of the National Economic and Development Authority approved the proposed national budget for 2008. The proposed budget will be submitted to Congress not later than Aug. 24.

The budget bill provides P11.5 billion for infrastructure projects in the countryside, P5.8 billion for the extension and construction of 23 airports, P5 billion for low-cost housing projects and P2.6 billion for the automation of elections, according to Andaya.

Fitch expects the budget deficit this year to swell to P125 billion from P64.8 billion in 2006 because of anemic tax collection. A budget deficit is the difference between revenues and expenditures.

Fitch said a P125-billion deficit would result from a P1.028-trillion revenue collection and P1.153-trillion expenditure.

The government said it would spend P1.181 trillion on revenues of P1.118 trillion.

The Arroyo administration is targeting a full-year deficit of P63 billion.

A FORCEFUL, CONFIDENT President Arroyo stresses a point in her State of the National Address on Monday at the Batasang Pambansa. INQUIRER PHOTO

Disappointing

Citing the revenue shortfall in the first half of the year, Fitch said the government would be unable to rein in the deficit in the second half.

"Year-to-date tax collection in June 2007 was about P52 billion below official targets, and increased by only 3.4 percent over 2006. This is a particularly disappointing result given last year's positive fiscal momentum and strong economic growth in the first half of 2007," Fitch said.

The Department of Finance earlier reported that the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs had collected a total of P426.9 billion, P51.7 billion short of the target.

The lower revenue collection led to the breaching of the budget deficit set for the first half. The deficit hit P41 billion, way above the target of P31.3 billion.

Sale of government stake

Malacañang has said it can still reach its full-year goal by raising more than P100 billion through the sale of government stakes in companies in the second half.

"In our view, optimism regarding revenue prospects in the short term is unwarranted, since various measures to improve tax collection and reduce evasion have been in place for some time, without meaningful results," James McCormack, Fitch's head of Asia sovereigns, said in a statement.

Fitch said increasing tax collection was crucial for the Philippines, especially if it wants to pursue its infrastructure program over the medium term.

Ms Arroyo said in her Sona that the government would pursue more projects that will improve on the country's infrastructure as a way to make the country's climate more conducive for business.

Without improvement in tax collection, the government will have to fulfill its aim of developing infrastructure by borrowing more, a move that could bloat its debts, according to Fitch.

Not revising

It forecast the government's total debt would fall to 59 percent of GDP by the end of the year from a peak of 79 percent in 2004.

Fitch's outlook on the Philippines improved from "negative" to "stable" last year. A "stable" outlook means a country does not face the threat of having its credit rating downgraded in the short term.

Although it sees the Philippines breaching its deficit target for the year, Fitch said it was not revising its outlook on the Philippines.

With a report from Reuters

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We find ways

DOJ to press charges vs Fr. Bossi's kidnappers

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE DEpartment of Justice is bent on pursuing a case against the abductors of Fr. Giancarlo Bossi.

But it appears Bossi's superiors are not too keen on the prospect of him testifying.

Ricardo Cabaron, Western Mindanao state prosecutor, said the DOJ was saddened by the statement of Fr. Gianni Sandalo, superior of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME) to which Bossi belongs, that the freed priest would not take the witness stand.

"It's unfortunate to hear that Father Bossi's superior won't allow him to testify," Cabaron said.

He said PIME was bound by Philippine laws.

"Bossi is an Italian priest and he is here in our country as a guest; as a guest he should submit to the laws of his host country. He cannot set conditions on himself," Cabaron said.

Earlier, Sandalo said Bossi was interested in sharing his ordeal, but testifying against his kidnappers was "no longer part of the priest's mission."

"We can do that [testify], all right, but as much as possible we want to leave this kind of case to the government," Sandalo said.

Sandalo said it was the same stand taken by the PIME after Fr. Luciano Benedetti was kidnapped several years ago.

He said Benedetti decided not to pursue the case against his captors.

"Because, according to Luciano, his captors were young and at that age they did not know what they were doing," Sandalo said.

In Bossi's case, his captors were poor fishermen, Sandalo said.

"His captors were poor fishermen (who were) just following the orders of big people and we don't really have (any) idea who the mastermind (was). It will not be fair," Sandalo said.

For his part, Cabaron said: "Bossi could provide us with a clearer picture as he was in captivity for 39 days and he alone could provide us with information on his captors."

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GMA urged: Let trees grow, keep Reyes in DENR

By TJ Burgoinio and Allison Lopez

REYES

ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE RALLYING BEhind the retention of Angelo Reyes as environment secretary even as a group of Manila residents registered their opposition to the appointment of former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza as Reyes' successor.

The environmentalists have appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to keep Reyes at the department at least until the completion of the "Trees for Life" reforestation campaign.

The Trees for Life is a joint project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Green Army to plant 20 million seedlings across the country from July to December.

According to Mike Ibañez, Reyes is the only environment secretary "who has the conviction in protecting the environment."

Mother Earth member Sandra Hammett appealed to the President, who she said was a classmate, to allow Reyes "to let his trees grow."

Good ideas

Last Wednesday, the day the Trees for Life project was launched, the President announced that Reyes would be moved to the energy department and would be replaced by Atienza.

Replacing Reyes now would arrest the momentum of the project, said Odette Alcantara, also of Mother Earth.

Apart from being closely involved with green groups' tree-planting campaigns, Reyes has "good ideas on mining," and hence, should be allowed to stay on at his post, said Leonarda Camacho of the Metro Councils of Women Balikatan Movement.

Women environmentalists, in a letter to the President, said they were concerned about the fate of 20 million trees that were adopted for planting when the project was launched.

Alcantara said if the Trees for Life project should be discontinued because of Reyes' departure, it would backfire on Ms Arroyo.

"She's the one who will look very bad here," she said.

A group of concerned citizens of Manila, meanwhile, formally filed a joint opposition with the congressional Commission on Appointments to Atienza's appointment.

Led by lawyer Vladimir Cabigao, the Alliance of Manileños Instituting Righteousness (Amir) cited "doubts" about Atienza's fitness to faithfully execute the country's laws as a Cabinet member because of his record on public health and safety issues when he was mayor of Manila.

The Winner Foundation environmental group, which used to be the caretaker of the Arroceros Forest Park, earlier objected to the appointment of Atienza, whom they dubbed the "butcher of Arroceros," for cutting down the trees to give way to the construction of a building inside the park.

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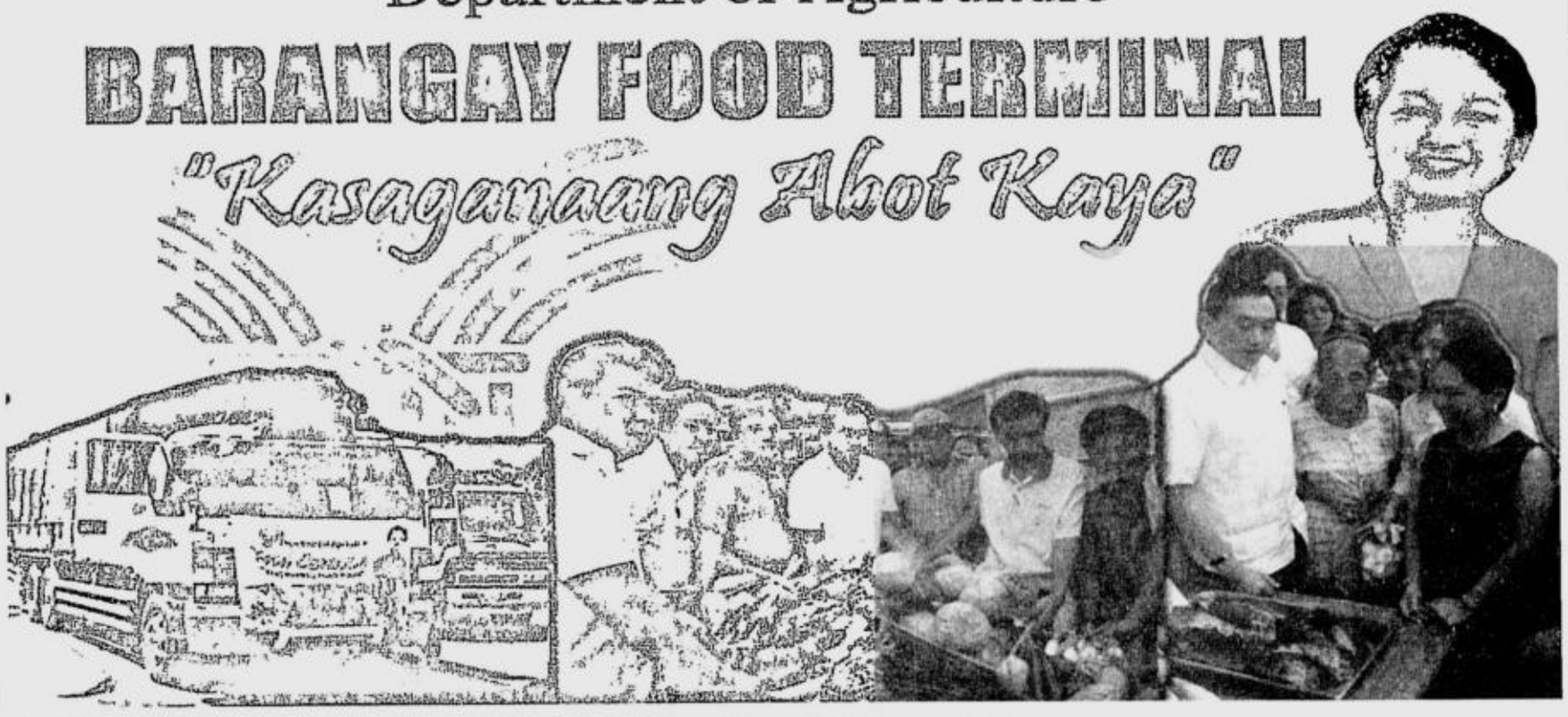
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Real-life castaway

By Tarra Quismundo

AFTER BRAVING THE OPEN SEA AND BEING marooned on an uninhabited island, a Filipino fisherman has returned to his homeland.

The Philippine Embassy in Koror, Palau, has reported to its home office that Jonathan Tawameo, a Filipino fisherman who got lost at sea during a storm, has been rescued and immediately repatriated to his native General Santos City.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said Tawameo returned to his hometown on July 18, more than a month after he was rescued in an island somewhere in Palau.

Tawameo was lost for 13 days after his 14-foot fishing boat, which operated with a larger fishing vessel, went out to sea to fish alone. The fisherman said he turned back after "he noted signs of low pressure forming in the area, indicating a storm." The mother boat had left, however, when he came back.

For 10 days, Tawameo drifted at sea, surviving on fish and rainwater. He made it through the storm and, on May 27, "navigated his boat to a small, uninhabited island where he found an unoccupied hut and fishing gear," the DFA said. In the next three days, he ate wild papaya and fish to survive.

Details about the rescue were scarce, but the DFA said a Palau native found him on May 30 and brought him to a village on another island some 800 kilometers away from Koror. From there, Palau marine authorities sent a patrol boat to pick him up and brought him to the Philippine mission in Koror.

7th Harry Potter book fastest selling in history

From page A1

visit to the country.

"This weekend, kids and adults alike are sitting on buses, in the park, on airplanes and in restaurants reading 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows'," Holton said.

US sales of the seventh and final book of fantasy series hit 8.3 million, comfortably beating the previous Potter instalment, which posted sales of 6.9 million copies on the first day, US publisher Scholastic announced.

In Britain, Bloomsbury sold a record 2.7 million copies in the first 24 hours, up from 2 million for "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince."

The same company also announced nearly 400,000 copies of the English language edition of the book were bought in Germany over the same period.

Rowling, 41, is likely to see her fortune swell further over the coming years. She is estimated to be worth $1.12 billion already, making her the first billionaire author.

In the Philippines, Henry Chua, general manager for trade and education of Scholastic Phil. Inc., said the total number of "Deathly Hallows" books up for distribution was in the "thousands" but that actual sales were confidential.

A check of three bookstores in Metro Manila showed over 2,000 copies had been sold since the book's release on Saturday. National Bookstore in Glorietta has sold over 1,000 copies, while Powerbooks branches in Shangri-La and Glorietta have each sold more than 600 copies.

Thousands of Potter fans queued outside bookstores in major cities around the world over the weekend to get hold of the book, which answers the questions on every reader's lips—"Who dies at the end?" and in particular, "Does Harry survive?"

Pirated copies seized

In India, police on Monday said they seized hundreds of pirated copies of the cover of "Deathly Hallows" after raiding a printing press, storage depot and private home in Bangalore.

Internet versions of the book also surfaced last week and two US newspapers ran reviews before its publication, but it was not enough to dampen enthusiasm for the last chapter of the boy wizard's increasingly bloody fight against the forces of evil.

Barnes & Noble Inc., the world's largest book retailer, sold 1.8 million copies of "Deathly Hallows" in the first 48 hours, while Borders Group Inc. sold around 1.2 million worldwide in a single day, both records for the outlets.

A spokesperson for leading British retailer WH Smith said sales were "absolutely record breaking" and added: "We are staggered by the speed of the sale."

Not the end

"This isn't the end of Harry Potter by any means," said Steve Riggio, CEO of Barnes & Noble. "Barnes & Noble expects to sell millions of Harry Potter books over the next few years."

Reviews of "Deathly Hallows" have been almost universally glowing, noting the darker tone of book seven in which several characters die.

Critical reaction to the previous six Potter tales had been mixed.

$4B from movies

In addition to the books, the first five Hollywood adaptations of the Harry Potter stories have amassed around $4 billion at the global box office. The final film in the franchise is slated for release in 2010.

"After 608 crammed pages, it's still hard to believe it really is the end of the road for Harry," said Henry Sutton, books editor for the Daily Mirror tabloid in Britain.

ROLE PLAYING: A fan dressed like the evil wizard Lord Voldemort browses through the record-breaking newly released seventh and last Harry Potter volume at a bookstore in Manila. REUTERS

He believes that the epilogue at the end of book seven means there is "no possible return" for the Harry Potter saga, although not everyone agrees.

Hours after the release of "Deathly Hallows," Ladbrokes bookmakers cut their odds on an eighth Potter tale to 10/1 from 16/1, following a flurry of bets.

Potter frenzy

Some 325 million copies of the first six volumes have been sold worldwide, and translated into 64 languages.

The frenzy for the new Potter carried over to all Potters. Barnes & Noble said that besides "Deathly Hallows," 213,000 copies of other Potter books were sold at its stores over the weekend.

Collectors already were looking to cash in.

A set of all seven Potters, six of them first editions and two signed by illustrator Mary GrandPre, was being offered on abebooks.com for $2,181. The audiobook for "Deathly Hallows," signed by narrator Jim Dale, had an asking price of $319.80.

The numbers could really soar if anyone tries to sell one of the 1,600 hardcover copies that Rowling signed over the weekend.

Last spring, a Rowling-signed first edition of the first Potter book, "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" (renamed "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" in the United States) was auctioned in London for $56,319. *Reports fromAP, Reuters, AFP and Inquirer Research*

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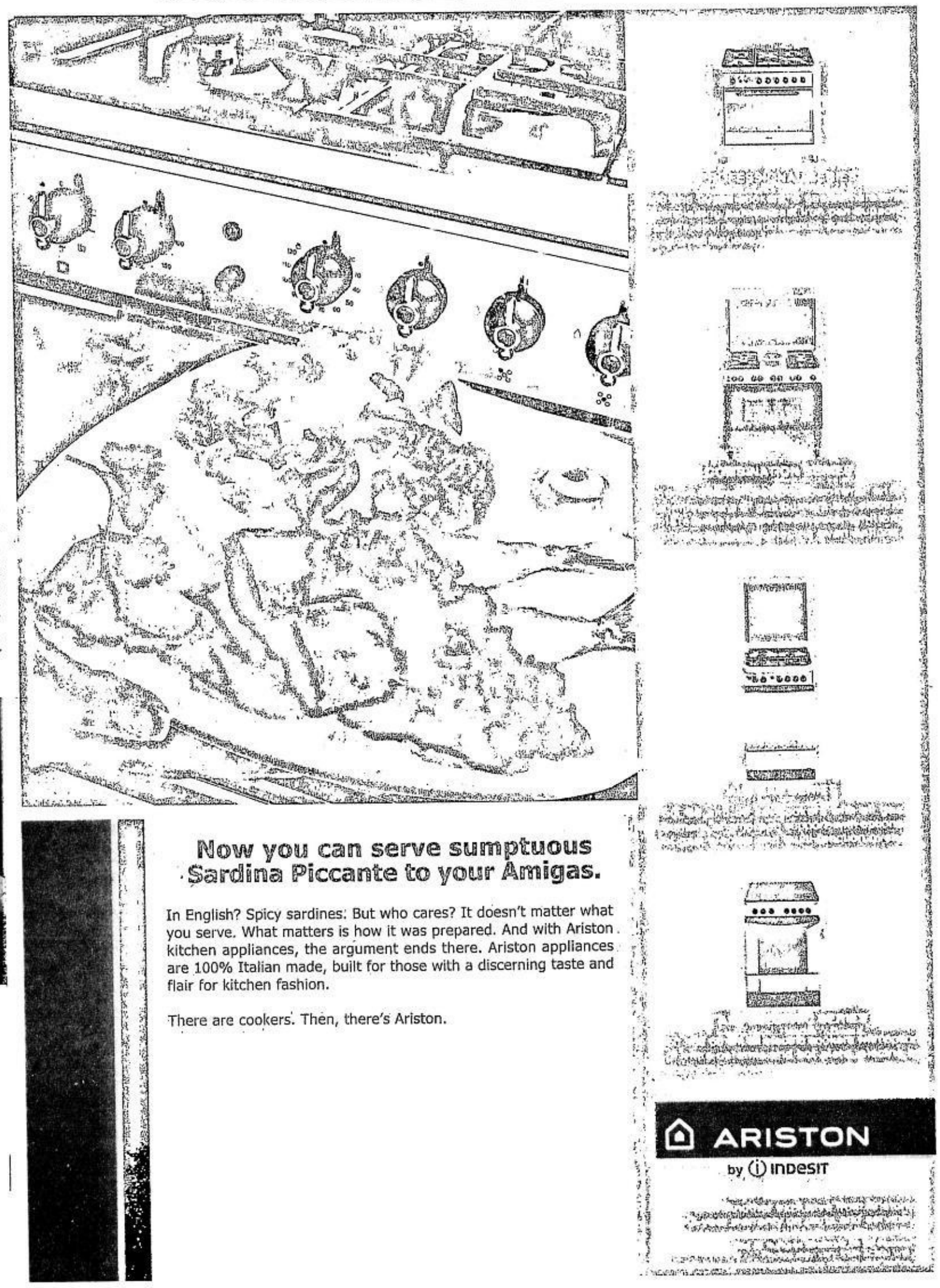

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Produce Jonas on Friday, SC orders AFP

From page A1

quired to produce on 27 July 2007 at 10 a.m. the person of Jonas Joseph T. Burgos before the Court of Appeals and show cause why he should not be immediately released from detention."

The other respondents were Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, 7th Infantry Division head Maj. Gen. Juanito Gomez, Intelligence Service of the AFP chief Maj. Gen. Delfin Bangit, Escort and Security Battalion's Lt. Col. Noel Clement, 56th Infantry Battalion commanding officer Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano and Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon.

Questions of fact

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez yesterday said the tribunal referred the case to the appellate court because there were questions of fact in Edita Burgos' petition that needed to be resolved in a trial.

Asked about the military's statement that it was not holding Jonas, Marquez said that claim would have to be heard in court. He said Jonas' mother would be at the hearing to present her arguments.

"We will see what will happen, depending on the arguments, if that writ will be sufficient to produce the person of Jonas Burgos," Marquez said.

Jonas, the 37-year-old son of the late press freedom fighter Jose Burgos, has been missing since April 28 after being forcibly taken by six men and one woman from the Ever Gotesco Mall in Quezon City.

His younger brother, Jose Luis "JL" Burgos, yesterday told reporters in a phone patch interview that the family was "happy but cautious" about the writ of habeas corpus.

"The family continues to pray that Jonas is well. We're happy but cautious because we haven't gotten hold of Jonas. Until we get hold of Jonas, we will always be cautious," he said, adding:

"We hope that this is the chance we've been waiting for."

JL also said the family had sought help in finding Jonas from the military and police, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the Office of the President, but that nothing concrete had come of it.

'GMA responsible'

He said the tribunal's order to the military to produce Jonas "only shows that the court believes that the military is involved in his abduction."

In her petition filed on July 11, Edita Burgos asked the high court to order the AFP to produce her son. She said the President was responsible for his disappearance and should be directed to pinpoint who among her security officials was behind it.

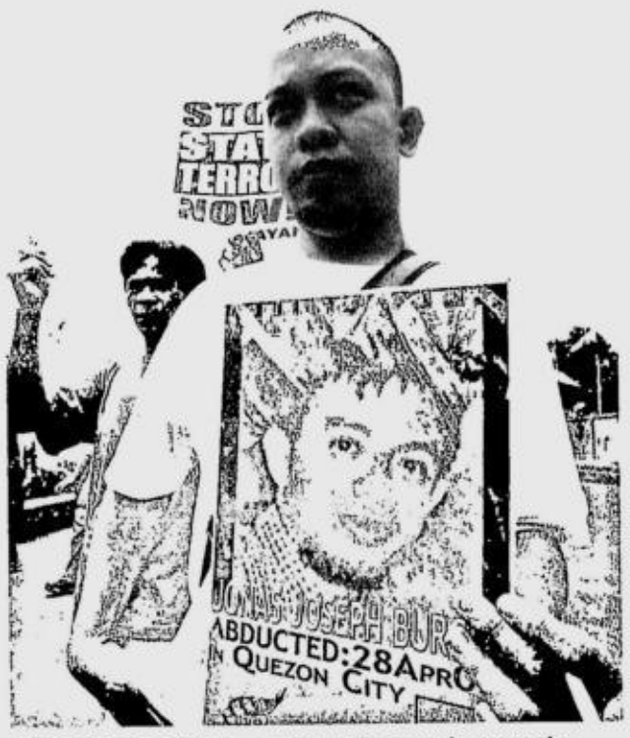
Burgos also said the police should be directed to search for Jonas and his abductors.

Her lawyer Ricardo Fernandez earlier told reporters that the family decided to go to the high court instead of the appellate court because the latter had purportedly dismissed habeas corpus cases against the military.

In calling for the two-day summit on extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances, Chief Justice Puno noted that writs of habeas corpus had not been effective in producing missing persons because the cases often ended with the respondents denying that they were holding these persons.

Punishment for guilty

Among the recommendations produced by the summit was the revision of the rules on habeas corpus to allow more permissible presentation of evidence and counter-evidence, and leeway for petitioners to ask the court for an order to search a specific place in the presence of the CHR and police.



RALLYING POINT: Jonas Burgos has now become the symbol of the unabated wave of enforced disappearances. Brother Luis Burgos joined yet another rally last week to demand the release of Jonas. INQUIRER PHOTO

INQUIRER PHOTO

ESPERON: The military wants to get to the bottom of the killings but leftists are not cooperating with probers.

General Esperon said the President's appeal to Congress in her State of the Nation Address to pass laws meting out harsh punishment to the perpetrators of political killings was borne out of her desire to get the killers.

"She really wants to punish the people who are guilty," he said.

Esperon stressed that the AFP itself wanted to get to the bottom of the killings, many of which had been blamed on it by militant groups.

He said the AFP had put up a human rights office and conducted investigations of soldiers linked to the killings, except that militant groups had refused to take part in these inquiries.

"Ano ba yan. Do they really believe in the judicial process, in the rule of law, or are they just engaging in propaganda?" he said.

Asked if he doubted the sincerity of militant groups in seeking an end to the killings, Esperon said: "I'm not doubting it. It's already confirmed."

He said he did not expect human rights groups like Karapatan to speak out against those who beheaded 10 Marines in Basilan early this month.

Clash of figures

Esperon also reiterated a constant claim of government officials—that Karapatan was padding its figures. (According to Karapatan records, there have been more than 800 extrajudicial killings since 2001, when Ms Arroyo came to office.)

He cited the 23 supposed members of the extremist Abu Sayyaf who were killed in Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan in March 2005 and who, he said, were on Karapatan's list.

"Even five men who it said were dead but were actually alive are included in the list. So what kind of motive is that?" he said. *With reports from TJ Burgonio and Christine O. Avendaño*

NBI clears trader in Burgos kidnap

By Tina G. Santos

A BUSINESSMAN FROM NUEVA Ecija yesterday submitted to a lie detector test at the National Bureau of Investigation regarding one of the vehicles allegedly used in the abduction of Jonas Burgos—and tested negative.

Renato Alfaro, 50, brought his car—a 1998 maroon Mitsubishi Lancer GLXi with Plate No. WAM 155—to the NBI and said he had no idea why the vehicle was being linked to the abduction.

"Contrary to its description in the newspapers, it's not a box-type," he said, adding that he was the car's third owner.

The NBI had earlier said a red box-type Mitsubishi Lancer with Plate No. WAM 155 was one of the two vehicles used in Burgos' abduction.

The bureau said a check with the Land Transportation Office showed the car was registered in Alfaro's name.

(An informer had also said that the other vehicle, a maroon Toyota Altis with plate number XBC 881, was assigned to Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, the Army chief. Tolentino denied that the car had been used for such a purpose.)

According to Alfaro, he received a call from a former office mate from whom he had bought the car, asking him if he had lent it to anyone.

"I never lent it to anybody. I was so shocked when he told me that it was involved in a kidnapping case. But I was more shocked when I learned that it was the Jonas Burgos case he was referring to," Alfaro told reporters.

He said he immediately went to the police to give a statement and clear his name.

"It's very hard. What if I'm suddenly shot dead? I fear not only for myself but also for my family," Alfaro said. "That's why I decided to come out. I also want to show the Burgos family that I know nothing about the kidnapping."

Alfaro said he was at home on April 28, the day Burgos was abducted.

"I remember that at the time, my wife had just come home from Canada because my mother-in-law died," he said.

Alfaro's polygraph test was "negative for any signs of deception," according to an NBI agent who refused to be named for lack of authority to speak to the media.

"Meaning, he's telling the truth," the agent said, adding that the bureau would dig deeper into the case.

CPP not confirming or denying if Jonas is NPA

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE Communist Party of the Philippines sees "no point" in confirming or denying if Jonas Burgos is a member of its armed wing, the New People's Army, as earlier alleged by Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino.

Salud Rojas, public information bureau head of the CPP in Central Luzon, explained the noncommittal stance in a statement released yesterday.

"This regime makes no distinction between armed fighters and civilians, between combat-capable Red fighters and [injured fighters] in waging its 'dirty war,' anyway," Rojas said.

She cited the CPP-NPA's lack of trust in the Armed Forces of the Philippines: "Suppose we confirm he is one [of us], would the AFP let him have his day in court? No, it would not."

Tolentino had told reporters that according to the military's background check, Burgos was a member of an NPA unit in Bulacan.

Burgos, an agriculturist, had been training Bulacan farmers in organic farming.

"Most likely, Jonas would end up as one of the more than 800 *desaparecidos* (disappeared) and victims of summary execution," Rojas said.

She said that Burgos had been missing since April 28, "but his military captors have not budged an inch, even maligning [his] and the CPP's name by saying that his disappearance was due to an internal party struggle." *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

'Practical' solution for ex-future nurses

From page A1

perform simple medical tasks, mostly dealing with patient medication and care, under the direction of a full nurse or a physician.

In the Philippines, practical nurses are high school graduates who take a two-year vocational nursing course so they can work in medical facilities.

Brion said the labor department was expecting only about 40,000 of the 78,000 examinees, including those who passed the leakage-marred licensure exam in June 2006, to hurdle the test.

"We're anticipating that many of them (flunkers) will do a retake. So we think that one fallback position is to have them licensed as practical nurses," Brion told reporters.

"This is assuming that there are some who would not do the retake," he said.

Huge demand

The labor secretary noted that there remained a big demand for practical or vocational nurses in hospitals and clinics both in the country and abroad.

Giving another type of nursing license to flunkers is one way of helping them achieve their dreams of finding work abroad, Brion said.

"This will be a sunrise opportunity for them because they could still practice their course even though they failed the test," he said.

Brion said he recently broached the idea to Sen. Edgardo Angara, an educator, and to officials of the Commission on Higher Education and the Professional Regulation Commission.

"They all agreed to its viability so we'll meet soon and discuss it," he said.

Results next month

Brion said the results of the June nursing licensure exam would be released by the middle of next month.

Out of 42,000 who took the June 2006 licensure exam only 17,000 passed it.

The government was forced to administer a retake of two parts of the exam after the United States' Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools said it would not admit passers of the leakage-tainted June 2006 test.

The first batch of retakers (about 13,000) voluntarily took last month Tests III and V (medical-surgical nursing and psychiatric nursing). The next batch will have their retake in December.

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Not your set, folks; it's your cell phone

SMART COMMUNICations Inc. said yesterday it was ready to offer the first commercial mobile TV service in the country now that sister company MediaQuest Holdings Inc. bought 360media Corp., a licensed direct-to-user (DTU) satellite television provider formerly known as GV Broadcasting Systems Inc.

Smart and MediaQuest both belong to the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) group of companies.

PLDT president and CEO Napoleon Nazareno said Smart would be taking care of the cellular network service, marketing, distribution, customer care and billing, while MediaQuest would be in charge of developing and buying content for the service, and arrangements with advertisers.

MediaQuest president Orlando Vea said mobile TV was conceptualized last year and took months of research and testing, including the live broadcast of the Pacquiao-Solis bout last April 15.

The acquisition of 360media, which was formalized last week, was the final piece of the puzzle.

360media owns one of only two licenses recognized by the National Telecommunications Commission for direct-to-user satellite services which is what MediaQuest needed so it could offer mobile TV services.

The first live test broadcast was done on Smart networks last April 15, featuring the Pacquiao-Solis bout aired through the National Broadcasting Corp. (NBC).

Three months hence, the mobile TV service, branded as "myTV," now offers CNN, BBC World, CNBC, Basketball TV, Jack TV, Fashion TV and MTV.

More channels will be offered soon, all delivered in the DVBH (Digital Video Broadcasting-Handheld) format.

Vea, MobileQuest president, said Smart chose to provide the service via DVBH because it is the most widely adopted technology worldwide.

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Capping its year-long chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Philippines is proud to host the 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM), the Post Ministerial Conferences (PMC), the 14th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and related meetings at the Philippine International Convention Center from July 29 to August 2, 2007.

These meetings will build upon and advance the landmark decisions of the 12th ASEAN Summit, the 2nd East Asia Summit and other related summits that were held under the Chairmanship of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Cebu last January.

The AMM is the annual regular meeting of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN member-countries Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The 40th AMM will be held on July 30.

The PMC's are the annual meetings between the ASEAN Foreign Ministers and their counterparts from the ten Dialogue Partners of ASEAN, namely, Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia and the United States of America. At the Manila meetings on August 1, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers will meet their counterparts from Australia, Canada, the European Union, New Zealand, Russia and the United States. The meetings with the Foreign Ministers of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and India took place at the sidelines of the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu last January.

The ARF is the only forum in the Asia-Pacific dedicated to addressing regional and international security issues. The 14th ARF will be held on August 2 and bring together the Foreign Ministers of the ten ASEAN countries, the Foreign Ministers of the ten Dialogue Partners and the Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. The 14th ARF will welcome Sri Lanka to the forum, bringing the number of ARF participating countries to 27.

There will also be a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT --ASEAN plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea), as well as a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the countries participating in the East Asia Summit (EAS -- ASEAN plus Australia, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and New Zealand).

"One Caring and Sharing Community"

The theme of the 40th AMM/PMC/14th ARF will be "One Caring and Sharing Community," the same theme of the 12th ASEAN Summit. This theme reflects the Philippine commitment to ensure that ASEAN will remain an organization that cares for all its peoples, that places them at the center of the region's community-building vision, that protects the environment and improves their quality of life, and that shares in both the efforts for and the benefits from greater regional integration and cooperation.

ASEAN Foreign Ministers at the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu

The 40th AMM will adopt measures to implement key decisions of the 12th ASEAN Summit. This includes the commitments contained in the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. ASEAN is expected to agree on steps that member states can take to help one another's nationals in conflict or crisis situations around the world.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers will also propose that August 8 be declared as an ASEAN Special Day in all ASEAN member countries, to mark the 40th anniversary of the organization's founding.

Expanding Regional Cooperation

ASEAN will again take the initiative to broaden and deepen regional cooperation with its Dialogue Partners. Two important documents will be signed by the Foreign Ministers – the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Australia Comprehensive Partnership Agreement, and the ASEAN-Russia Framework Agreement for Cultural Cooperation. Two separate Plans of Action for ASEAN-Canada and ASEAN-European Union cooperation - will also be adopted.

H.E. Pres. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo Chair of the 12th ASEAN Summit, will keynote the opening of the 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting

The ASEAN Charter

One of the highlights of the 40th AMM will be the submission of the First Draft of the ASEAN Charter, which brings ASEAN one step closer to becoming a rules-based regional organization with an international legal personality. The Charter will enshrine ASEAN's principles, values and norms. It will prepare the Association to face the challenges of a changing world.

The High-Level Task Force (HLTF) on the Drafting of the ASEAN Charter, established at the 12th ASEAN Summit and headed by Ambassador Rosario G. Manalo of the Philippines, will submit the First Draft of the ASEAN Charter to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers for their consideration. The Final Draft will be presented for adoption to the ASEAN Leaders during the 13th ASEAN Summit in Singapore in November 2007.

H.E. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo poses with her counterpart leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members countries and ASEAN's dialogue partners.

SEANWFZ Commission

Another landmark event of the 40th AMM will be the convening of the Commission for the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ Commission). The Meeting will review the progress in the implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty since it entered into force in 1997. The Ministers will also adopt a Plan of Action that will strengthen the implementation of the Treaty, which should remain an important and relevant instrument in preserving regional peace and security.

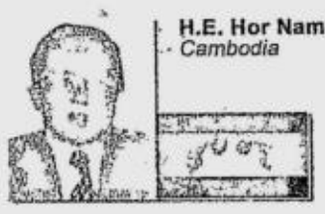
From Confidence-building to Preventive Diplomacy

The 14th ARF will address security concerns, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, pandemics, and disaster mitigation and response. Mechanisms to support and enhance the role of the ARF Chair in dealing with emergency and crisis situations are on the table. Concrete and practical cooperative activities such as live exercises in the field of disaster relief are also on the agenda. These developments will strengthen the ARF's role in promoting regional confidence-building and preventive diplomacy.

ASEAN Foreign Ministers

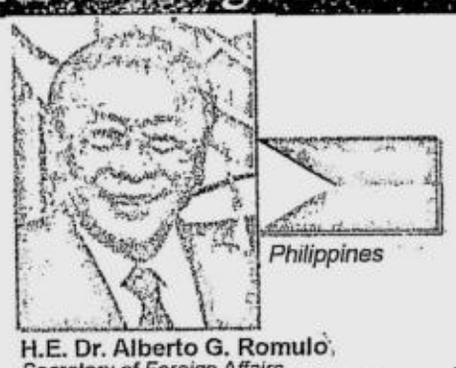
HRH Prince Mohamed Bolkiah
Brunei Darussalam

Capital : Bandar Seri Begawan
Land area : 5,765 sq.km
Population : 370,100 (2005)
Language : Malay, English
Religion : Islam
Currency : B$ (Bruneian Dollar).
GDP : US$ 6.3 billion (2005)



H.E. Hor Namhong
Cambodia

Capital : Phnom Penh
Land area : 181,035 sq.km
Population : 13.7 million (2005)
Language : Khmer
Religion : Buddhism
Currency : Riel
GDP : US$ 5.5 billion (2005)



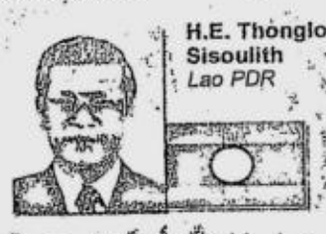
Philippines

H.E. Dr. Alberto G. Romulo
Secretary of Foreign Affairs
Chairman of the 40th AMM / 14th ARF

Capital : Manila
Land area : 300,000 sq. km.
Population : 84.2 million (2005)
Language : Pilipino, English
Religions : Roman Catholic, Christianity, Islam
Currency : Peso
GDP : US$97.7 billion (2005)

H.E. Dr. Nur Hassan Wirajuda
Indonesia

Capital : Jakarta
Land area : 1,890,000 sq.km.
Population : 220.0 million (2005)
Language : Bahasa Indonesia
Religion : Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism
Currency : Rupiah
GDP : US$ 280.3 billion (2005)



H.E. Thongloun Sisoulith
Lao PDR

Capital : Vientiane
Land area : 236,800 sq.km
Population : 6.0 million (2005)
Language : Lao
Religion : Buddhism
Currency : Kip
GDP : US$ 3.7 billion (2005)

H.E. Dato' Seri Syed Hamid Bin Syed Jaafar Albar
Malaysia

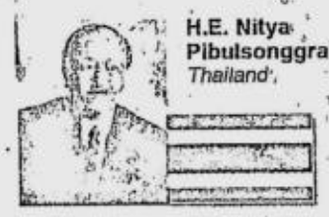
Capital : Kuala Lumpur
Land area : 330,257 sq.km
Population : 26.1 million (2005)
Language : Melayu, English, Chinese, Tamil
Religion : Islam, Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity
Currency : Malaysian Ringgit
GDP : US$ 130.7 billion (2005)

H.E. U Nyan Win
Myanmar

Capital : Yangon
Land area : 676,577 sq.km
Population : 56.0 million (2005)
Language : Myanmar
Religion : Buddhism, Christianity, Islam
Currency : Myanmar Kyat
GDP : US$ 5.9 billion (2005) at current market prices

H.E. George Yeo
Singapore

Capital : Singapore
Land area : 697.1 sq.km
Population : 4.4 million (2005)
Language : English, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil,
Religion : Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism and Hinduism
Currency : Singapore Dollar (S$)
GDP : US$116.7 billion (2005)



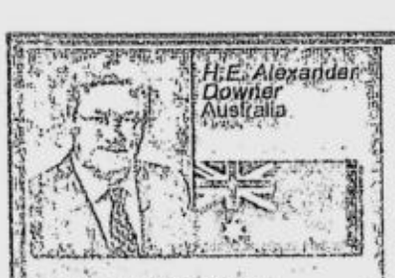
H.E. Nitya Pibulsonggram
Thailand

Capital : Bangkok
Land area : 513,254 sq.km
Population : 64.8 million (2005)
Language : Thai
Religion : Buddhism, Islam
Currency : Baht
GDP : US$ 176.6 billion (2005)

H.E. Pham Gia Khiem
Vietnam

Capital : Ha Noi
Land area : 330,363 sq.km
Population : 83.1 million (2005)
Language : Vietnamese
Religion : Buddhism, Christianity
Currency : Dong
GDP : US$ 52.8 billion (2005)

Ministers Attending
40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting
14th ASEAN Regional Forum



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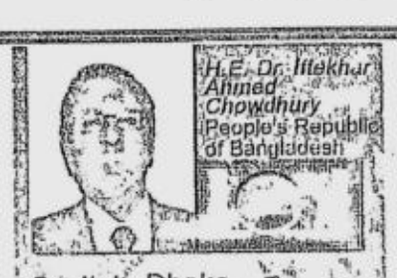
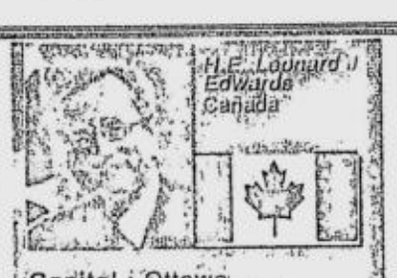


Capital : Dhaka
Land area : 143,998 sq km (55,598 sq miles)
Population : 152.6 million (UN, 2005)
Major Language : Bengali
Major Religion : Islam, Hinduism
Monetary Unit : 1 taka = 100 paisa
Main exports : Garments, fish, jute goods, leather products
Per Capita Income : US $470 (World Bank, 2006)



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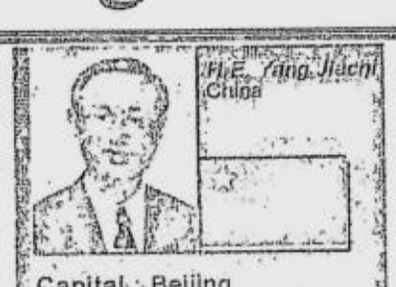

Capital : Beijing
Land area : 9.6 million sq km (3.7 million sq miles)
Population : 1.3 billion (via UN, 2006)
Major Language : Mandarin Chinese
Major Religion : Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism
Monetary Unit : 1 Renminbi (yuan) (Y) = 10 jiao = 100 fen;
Main exports : Manufactured goods, including textiles, garments, electronics, arms
Per Capita Income : US $1,740 (World Bank, 2006)

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27 countries cover a large part of the continent of Europe, with half a billion in population.
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Land area : 3.1 million sq km (1.2 million sq miles)
Population : 1.1 billion (UN, 2005)
Major Languages : Hindi, English and at least 16 other official languages
Major Religions :Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism
Monetary Unit : 1 Indian Rupee = 100 paise
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Major Language : Japanese
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Monetary Unit : yen
Main exports : Vehicles, computer parts, chemicals, scientific instruments and watches
Per Capita income : US $38,980 (World Bank, 2006)

Capital : Ulan Bator
Land area : 1.56 million sq km (603,909 sq miles)
Population : 2.6 million (via UN, 2006)
Major Language : Mongolian
Major Religion: Buddhism
Monetary Unit : 1 Togrog (tugrik) = 100 mongos
Main exports : Copper concentrate, dehaired cashmere, textiles, hides
Per Capita Income : US $690 (World Bank, 2006)

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Population : 5.9 million (UN, 2005)
Major Language : English (official), Pidgin, native languages
Major Religions : Christianity, indigenous beliefs
Monetary Unit : 1 kina = 100 toea
Main exports : Gold, petroleum, copper, coffee, palm oil, logs
Per Capita Income : US $660 (World Bank, 2006)

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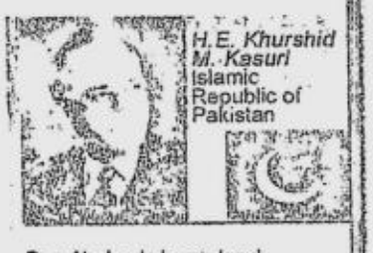

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Major Religion: Islam
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Main exports : Textile products, rice, cotton, leather goods
Per Capita Income : US $690 (World Bank, 2006)

Capital : Moscow
Land area : 17 million sq km (6.6 million sq miles)
Population : 143.8 million (via UN, 2006)
Major Language : Russian
Major Religions: Christianity, Islam
Monetary Unit : 1 rouble = 100 kopecks
Main exports : Oil and oil products, natural gas, wood and wood products, metals, chemicals, weapons and military equipment
Per Capita income : US $4,460 (World Bank, 2006)

Capital : Colombo
Land area : 65,610 sq km
Population : 20,926,315 million
Major Languages : Sinhala
Major Religions: Buddhist
Monetary Unit : Sri Lanka rupee
Main exports : textiles and apparel, tea and spices; diamonds, emeralds, rubies; coconut products, rubber manufactures, fish
Per Capita Income : $4,700 (2006 est.)

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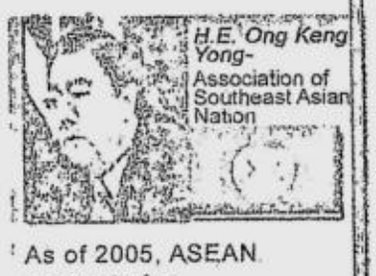
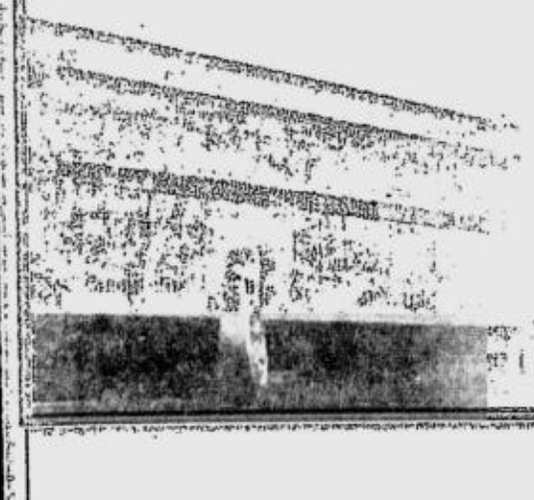
Land area : 99,313 sq km (38,345 sq miles)
Population : 48.2 million (UN, 2005)
Major Language : Korean
Major Religions : Buddhism, Christianity
Monetary Unit : won
Main exports : Electronic products, machinery and transport equipment
Per Capita Income : US $15,830 (World Bank, 2006)

Capital : Dili
Land area : 14,609 sq km (5,641 sq miles)
Population : 857,000 (UN, 2005)
Major Languages : Tetum and Portuguese (official), Indonesian and English (working languages)
Major Religion: Christianity
Monetary Unit : 1 US dollar = 100 cents
Main exports : Coffee, marble, potential for oil exports
Per Capita Income : $750 (World Bank, 2006)

Capital : Washington DC
Land area : 9.8 million sq km (3.8 million sq miles)
Largest City : New York City
Population : 300 million (US Census Bureau estimate; 2006)
Major Language : English
Major Religion: Christianity
Monetary Unit
1 US dollar = 100 cents
Main exports : Computers and electrical machinery, vehicles, chemical products, food and live animals, military equipment and aircraft
Per Capita income : US $43,740 (World Bank, 2006)

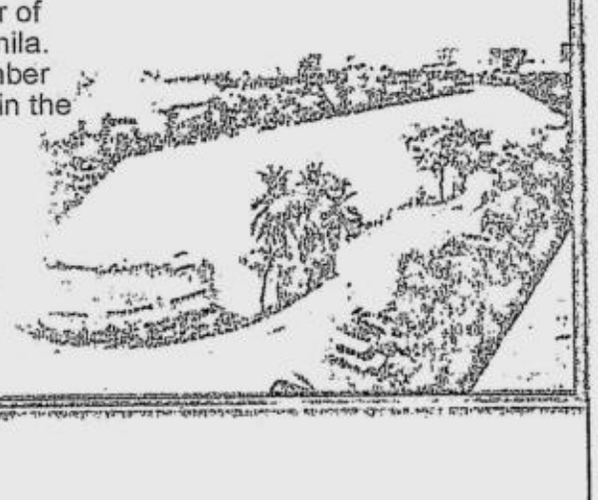


As of 2005, ASEAN accounts for:
- More than 567 million people or nearly a tenth of the world's population
- 4.5 million square kilometers in total area
- a combined gross domestic product of almost US$ 876 billion
- a total trade of about US$ 850 billion
- a total of over US$25 billion in foreign direct investments



The ***Philippine International Convention Center (PICC)*** is located at the center of the sprawling Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Complex in Pasay City, Metro Manila. It remains the pre-eminent convention facility in the Philippines . Inagurated on 5 September 1976, the PICC stands as Asia 's first international convention center and was first used in the hosting of the 1976 IMF-WB Meeting. It plays host to various local and international conventions, meetings, fairs and social events.

THE ***FORUM*** -Adjacent to the Plenary and Reception Halls, this novel venue that is air-conditioned bubble of sturdy PVC-engineered fabric encloses approximately 4,292 square meters. It is capable of housing more than 200 exhibit booths or 5,000 persons in a theater-style seating arrangment. This multi-functional facility is perfect for exhibitions, social functions and corporate events. **The Forum will house the International Media Center during the 40th AMM & 14th ARF.**



ASEAN NOC on the 40th AMM/PMC/14th ARF
www.40amm.org.ph

AMA Computer University
PLDT
SMART
Philippine Airlines
International Container Terminal Services, Inc.
MANILA BULLETIN

Ministers Attending
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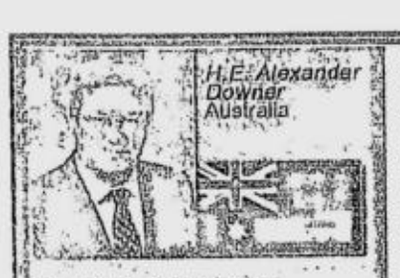

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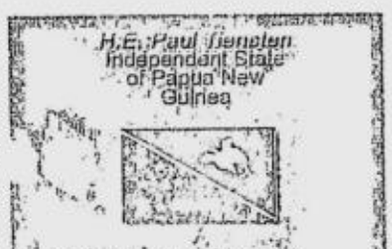

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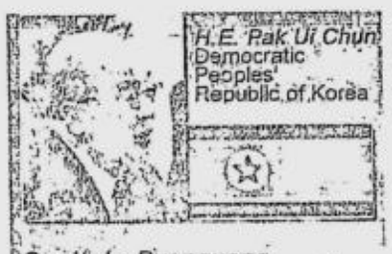

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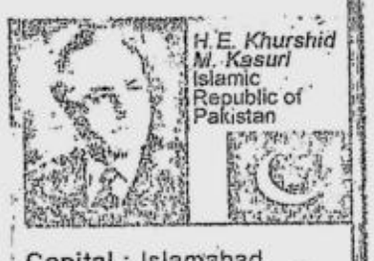

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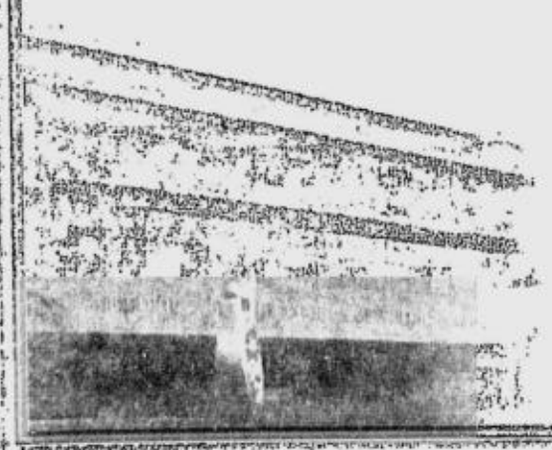
Monetary Unit : 1 US dollar = 100 cents
Main exports : Coffee, marble, potential for oil exports
Per Capita Income : $750 (World Bank, 2006)

Capital : Washington DC
Land area : 9.8 million sq km (3.8 million sq miles)
Largest City : New York City
Population : 300 million (US Census Bureau estimate; 2006)
Major Language : English
Major Religion: Christianity
Monetary Unit 1 US dollar = 100 cents
Main exports : Computers and electrical machinery, vehicles, chemical products, food and live animals, military equipment and aircraft
Per Capita income : US $43,740 (World Bank, 2006)

As of 2005, ASEAN accounts for:
- More than 567 million people or nearly a tenth of the world's population
- 4.5 million square kilometers in total area
- a combined gross domestic product of almost US$ 876 billion
- a total trade of about US$ 850 billion
- a total of over US$25 billion in foreign direct investments



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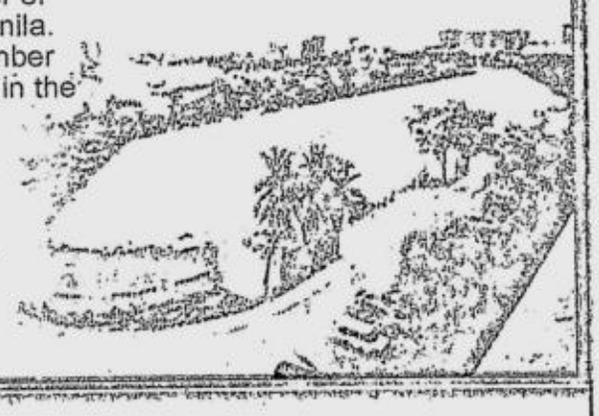

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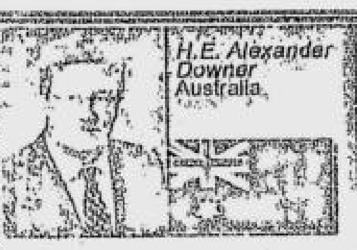
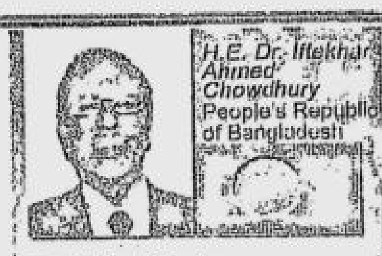
MANILA BULLETIN

Ministers Attending 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting 14th ASEAN Regional Forum



Capital : Canberra
Land area : 7.7 million sq km (2.9 million sq miles)
Population : 20.6 million (official estimate, 2006)
Major Language : English
Major Religion : Christianity
Monetary Unit 1 Australian dollar = 100 cents
Main exports : Ores and metals; wool, food and live animals: fuels, transport machinery and equipment
Per Capita Income US $32,220 (World Bank, 2006)

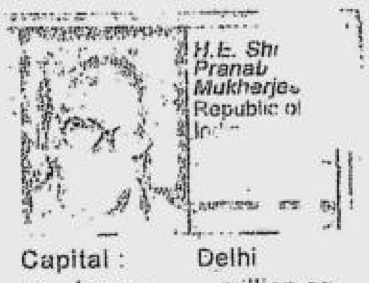


Capital : Dhaka
Land area : 143,998 sq km (55,598 sq miles)
Population : 152.6 million (UN, 2005)
Major Language : Bengali
Major Religion : Islam, Hinduism
Monetary Unit : 1 taka = 100 paisa
Main exports : Garments, fish, jute goods, leather products
Per Capita Income : US $470 (World Bank, 2006)

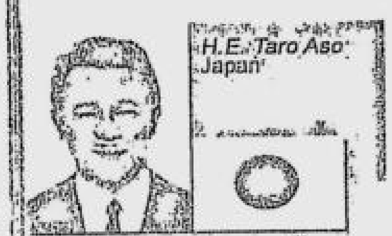
Capital : Ottawa
Land area : 9.9 million sq. km (3.8 million sq miles)
Population 32 million (UN 2005)
Major Languages : English, French (both official)
Major Religion : Christianity
Monetary Unit Canadian dollar = 100 cents
Main exports : Mac... ery and equipment, automotiv products, metals and plastics, forestry produ agricultural and fishing products, ner
Pe Capita In
3 60(

Capital : Beijing
Land area 9.6 million sq km (3.7 million sq miles)
Population 1.3 billion (via UN, 2006)
Major Language Mandarin Chinese
Major Religion Buddhism, Christianity, Islam Taoism
Monetary Unit : Renminbi (yuan Y) jiao 100 fen:
Main exports Manufactured good ... textile
...apit... come

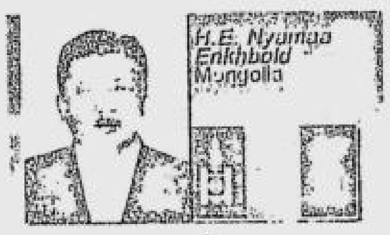
The European Union (EU) is a family of democratic European countries committed to working together for peace and prosperity
The EU is, n fact, unique Its member states have se up common institutions to which they delegate some of their sovereignty so that decisions on specific matters of joint interest can be made European level. ... countries cover a large part of the continent of Europe, with half a billi... populatic... EU countries ... ver ... DP is generated ... y ... this



Capital : Delhi
Land area ... million sq km (1.2 millic sq miles)
Population ... billion (UN, 2005)
Major Languages Hindi, English nd at least 16 other ... languages
Major Religions :Hinduism Islam Christiani..., Sikhis... Buddhism Jainism
Monetary Unit ndiar Rupee 100 paise
Main exports Agricultural products ... goods gems ... ewi soft...



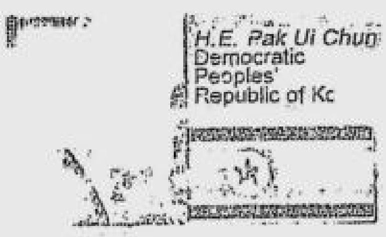
Capital : Tokyo
Land area : 377,864 sq km (145,894 sq miles)
Population : 127.7 million (via UN, 2006)
Major Language : Japanese
Major Religions : Shintoism, Buddhism
Monetary Unit : yen
Main exports : Vehicles, computer parts, chemicals, scientific instruments and watches
Per Capita income : US $38,980 (World Bank, 2006)



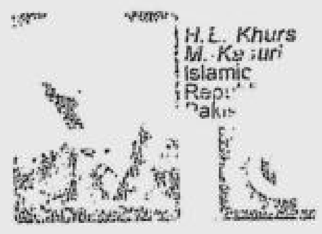
Capital : Ulan Bator
Land area : 1.56 million sq km (603,909 sq miles)
Population 2.6 million UN, 2006)
Major Language Mongolian
Major Religion: Buddhism
Monetary Unit : 1 Togrog (tugrik) = 100 mongos
Main exports : Copper concentrate dehaired cashmere, textiles, hides
Per Capita Income US $690 (World Bank, 2006)

Capital : Po Moresby
Land area ...,840 ... (178,704 sq m...)
Population ... UN 2005)
Major Language (official ... Pi... language)
Major Religions Christianity ... indige beliefs
Monetary Unit ... 100 toea
Main exports ... petroleum palm oil ... gs
Per Capita Incom $6...

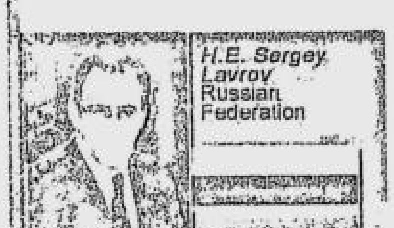
Capital Wellington
Largest ... Auckland
Land area 270,534 sq km (10 454 sq miles)
Population ... Str is ... and ...
Major Language Ma...
Major Religion ... New ... ($NZ
Main expor...
Capita ... me



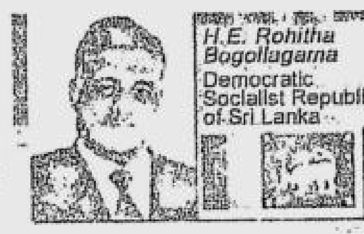
Capital ...yang
Land area ... (47 399 sq mil...)
Population ... (UN 2005
Major Language Kor
Major Religions Ma... athe... non-religious ... beliefs
Monetary Unit
Mai... xports



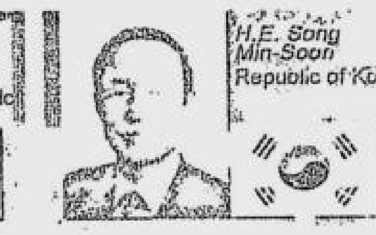
Capital
Land area ... sq ... (307 ... ...cluding ...stani... ...les
Population ... UN, 05
Major Languages ...ndi ... P...
Major Religion Islam
Monetary Unit Pakistan Rupe
Main export ... goods
Per Capita Income



Capital : Moscow
Land area : 17 million sq km (6.6 million sq miles)
Population : 143.8 million (via UN, 2006)
Major Language : Russian
Major Religions: Christianity, Islam
Monetary Unit : 1 rouble = 100 kopecks
Main exports : Oil and oil products, natural gas, wood and wood products, metals, chemicals, weapons and military equipment
Per Capita income : US $4,460 (World Bank, 2006)

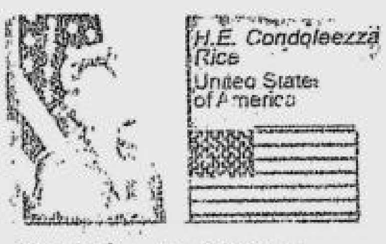


Capital : Colombo
Land area : 65,610 sq km
Population : 20,926,315 million
Major Languages : Sinhala
Major Religions: Buddhist
Monetary Unit Sri Lanka rupee
Main exports : textiles and apparel, tea and spices: diamonds emeralds, rubies: coconut products, rubber manufactures fish
Per Capita Income $4,700 (2006 est.)



Capital : Seoul
Land area 99 ... km (38,345 sq miles)
Population 48.2 million (UN, 2005)
Major Language : Korean
Major Religions Buddhism Christianity
Monetary Unit won
Main exports ... products, mach... transport equipme...
Per Capita Income US $15,830 (World Bank 2006)

Capital Dili
Land area 14,609 sq km (5,641 sq miles)
Population 857,000 (UN 2005
Major Languages ...tum and Portugu... Indon...an ...ag
Ma... R...
Mone... ...
Main exports marble ... ential ... exports
Per Capita Income $750 (World Bank 2006)



Capital Washington D
Land area 9.8 millio sq km (3.8 million sq miles)
Largest City : New York City
Population 300 million US Census Bu... estim... 2006)
Major Language : English
Major Religion: Christianity
Monetary Unit ... dolla ... 100 cents
Main exports Compute... electrical machinery vehicles chemical products food and live animals, military equipment and aircraft
Per Capita income : US $43,740 (World Bank, 2006

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... trade ... US$ 850 billion
... total of ... US$25 billion in ...ign ...irect investments

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Waning, waning

EDITORIAL

THAT WAS A PHRASE POPULARIZED BY FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos. And he used it in reference to President Macapagal-Arroyo, whose 2007 State of the Nation Address he crankily described as "OK *lang*. Not enough." As Isa Lorenzo put it, in a commentary for the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, "Indeed, many found the President's guarantees, which included more infrastructure projects, P150 billion to improve education, and appeals to Congress to pass legislation protecting witnesses to extrajudicial killings and cheaper medicines, lacking."

A bad habit acquired by media during the Marcos years is to count the number of times a presidential address is interrupted by applause. She received bonus standing ovations both years, but this year, the stamping and cheering came at the end, and not midway, through her speech. Last year, we know, the President's State of the Nation Address was interrupted 160 times, and this year, 106 times. Despite the gratuitous name-dropping, so promiscuous that one uncharitable commentator called it a social climber's Sona, even the enthusiasm of the President's allies seems to be waning, waning.

Public affection is a fickle thing even in the best of times. The President hasn't enjoyed it for years. But she has been much better at keeping the affections of the people that matter to her politically: the military, local officials and members of the House of Representatives. However, even if a president possesses a colossal ambition, the reality is that every president's political lifetime is finite. Sooner or later, the thoughts of military and civilian officials alike will start lingering on a president's potential successors. In other words, eventually, any president runs the risk of being a lame duck.

Last year, in her Sona, Ms Arroyo began the countdown to the end of her term, a countdown that, she implied in this year's Sona, is still on track. Much of the support for her stay in power after all has been premised on her stepping down at the end of her term in 2010. Haven't we often heard supporters of the President insist that the moment she betrays signs of wanting to extend her term, they will instantly oppose it? And yet yesterday, people had to wonder if the President isn't mulling over precisely that.

It was obvious from the President's address—her endless catalogue of pork barrel projects, her dangling patronage to both sides of the aisle, her pointed reminder to every member of Congress that she, not Congress, really holds the key to the national treasury—that she fears being considered a lame duck. She went that extra mile to try to prove she's not only still relevant but absolutely essential—even to her potential successors' ambitions. Her halting and, at times, unsure delivery hinted at the profound unease, the sense of insecurity, she feels in this regard.

She was applauded, most enthusiastically, twice. First, when she said she'd "rather be right than popular"; and then when she said, "From where I sit, I can tell you, a president is always as strong as she wants to be." The hearty applause was for her pointing out what we traditionally expect our presidents to be: genuine leaders armed with an authentic vision for change, unafraid to use their vast powers for the public good. Applause for an ideal quite divorced from reality.

For what is the reality of the Arroyo presidency? The President thinks power flows out of both the barrel of a gun and the national coffers: authority enforced by a commander in chief of an AFP that is ordered around like a private army, and by means of doles from someone who considers herself the chief disbursing officer instead of the chief executive. She is a leader for whom right is always exchangeable for popularity—maybe not with the public, but at least with the powers-that-be.

All these seven years under her watch, Ms Arroyo has preferred to buy loyalty rather than inspire devotion to doing the right things. Her most recent Cabinet appointments have, on the whole, been in the nature of political rewards than statesmanlike appointments. Add to that her passing the buck on handling political killings to Congress, instead of issuing firm and uncompromising orders to the AFP—and that is how Ms Arroyo has to be judged as a leader.

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GMA, please save La Mesa and Metro residents

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

LAST SUNDAY, I WENT TO THE LA MESA watershed to look at the proposed site of the housing project that some people, using a union of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) as front, want to construct inside the watershed, the source of water of 14 million residents of Metro Manila and environs.

First, I was shown a relief map of La Mesa that indicated where the housing project would be. The site is at the highest portion of the watershed. Its front is Quirino Avenue in Novaliches. At its back, the land slopes down to the reservoir. Below the reservoir is the Eco Park and beside it the executive housing project.

One look at the map and it becomes clear why Metro Manilans adamantly oppose the location of the housing project there, and why the Bicolano congressman is as adamantly pulling strings with Malacañang to secure the site for a handful of Quezon City residents, not Bicolanos whom he represents. And it also becomes clear why President Macapagal-Arroyo made a big mistake in inserting the words "subject to private rights" in the proclamation making La Mesa a "protected watershed."

Being at the highest part of the land, rainwater will flow and seep down from the homes to the reservoir below. The toilets of the homes in the 58-hectare slice of the watershed will be connected to individual septic tanks under the ground. Waste water from the kitchens, bathrooms, laundries, gardens and the downspouts will flow on the surface to streams, creeks and rivers to the reservoir. Thus, all the polluted water from the homes will flow, on the surface and underground, to the reservoir where the water Metro Manilans drink and use to wash and cook their food come from. I ask you: Would you like to drink water coming from the toilets of this congressman and his clients?

Besides, all the harmful chemicals—pesticides, fertilizers, battery acids, etc.—as well as poop and urine of pets in the gardens will be washed by rainwater down to the reservoir. The congressman talks about "technology" that would prevent water pollution. What "technology"? No technology has been invented yet that would prevent gravity from pulling water from the highest point to the lowest point, carrying with it all the pollutants that it gathers. There is no "technology" yet that would prevent the forces of nature from doing what God makes them do. Man is no match to nature.

To prevent mass poisoning, the housing project can be relocated somewhere else, and the MWSS is offering them a site for that. Thus, the descendants of the MWSS employees will still have their houses but Metro Manilans will not be poisoned.

But the land that the congressman and his contractor friend covet is right beside the heart of the commercial district of Novaliches. Thus, the land for which they will pay P5 (that's five pesos, *lima, cinco*) per square meter, is worth tens and hundreds of thousands of pesos per sq m. The area is 58 hectares, or 580,000 sq m. That's like winning in the lotto 10 times over. And all the congressman did was to convince a gullible GMA to insert four little words—"subject to private rights"—in her proclamation making La Mesa a "protected watershed."

This is contradictory. How can you protect a watershed if it is "subject to private rights"? I do not believe speculations that the congressman offered GMA something she could not refuse, such as a piece of the action. Her family is rich enough; it doesn't need anymore. What I believe is that our President (she is the President of all Filipinos, not only of the congressman and his clients) did not have the time and opportunity to analyze fully what was asked of her to do. I think glib tongues misled a gullible President.

I also believe that after the President has analyzed the repercussions of her action, she would withdraw those four little words. Imagine what disaster those four little words will foist on the nation's capital. It's as bad as chemical or biological warfare.

* * *

I was taken next to the proposed site of the housing project. We had to go via a roundabout way because the president of the union had posted guards at the entrance and would not let anybody through, including government employees taking care of the watershed. Imagine, a group preventing the government from going to land that it owns.

The site is thickly forested. Young trees grow among blackened fallen tree trunks. This indicates, said our forest escort, that the area was burned for *kaingin*. Some trees had their trunks girdled (the bark around a part of the trunk was removed) to kill them. Without the bark, nutrients from the soil cannot go up the tree to the branches and leaves. Without nutrients, the tree dies. Squatters then have an excuse to cut the tree.

Foresters said that large parts of the forest used to be burned every summer by squatters. These squatters were so vicious that they beheaded a forest guard and gang-raped his wife. Four of the five rapists are now undergoing trial for murder and rape. One is still at large.

Many of the squatters have been relocated, but some remain, preferring a hide-and-seek existence in the forest than a well-built home on a relocation site.

What saved La Mesa? The Eco Park and the Bantay Kalikasan set up by Gina Lopez of ABS-CBN and some donors. The Eco Park is now a beautiful, thickly forested area with a salt water swimming pool (25 sacks of salt are poured into the pool every month), picnic areas, pavilions, fitness trails, museums, a boating river, beautiful and clean bathrooms. Thank God for Gina and Bantay Kalikasan.

Heroes

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

HOW TO PRODUCE HEROES? NOT EASY, says Hands On Manila, which has embarked on that very quest, specifically with its program, "Galing Mo, Kid," meant to inspire heroism among the kids. "Heroism can't be taught from textbooks. But surrounding the children with the right role models might just do the trick."

I wish them all the luck in the world. Theirs is a heroic quest, especially in these dark days when role models of heroes are as plentiful as honest folk in Sodom. But perhaps that is not entirely a loss, as one can always teach heroism by trotting out negative examples. You show the kids what constitutes villainy, you can always show them what constitutes decency. You show the kids what plunges the country into darkness, you can always show them the path to light.

I did say only a couple of weeks ago that you can always respond to the students' demand to be shown the way of the dragon, the way of the samurai, or the way of Pedro Penduko by showing them the way of Miguel Zubiri. With the tagline, "Huwag Tularan." What applies to him, of course, applies tenfold to his boss, the one who just tried to apprise us of our state. Look at Zubiri and you will learn the difference between heroism and villainy; look at GMA and you will learn the meaning of heaven and hell.

Heroism isn't easily taught, but I have a couple of suggestions to add to the pedagogy. The first is something I've said in graduation talks over the years, which is that the reason heroism seems so scarce isn't that it isn't happening but that we do not have the eyes to see it. The mistake, as I told the Brent class more than a decade ago, is to think the heroic choice is always a grand one or a political one. The path to heroism does not lie in politics, nor is it always dotted with huge signs that say, "Act now, or forever be immobile." It lies in everyday life, and is posed by the small and ordinary choices we make on the fly.

My examples at the time included Filomena Tatlonghari, Stephen Guerrero and Eduardo de los Reyes. Tatlonghari was a public school teacher who was shot to death for refusing to give up a ballot box, Guerrero tried to stop a group of NBI agents from roughing up a jeepney driver but got roughed up by them himself, and De Los Reyes was the cop who blew the whistle on fellow cops for summarily executing the Kuratong Baleleng suspects. Small lives, big acts. Everyday choices, heroic deeds.

We do not lack for the same examples today. Musa Dimasidsing easily comes to mind. We keep harping on the terrorist proclivities of Moros, notably in the form of the Abu Sayyaf, why don't we harp on their heroic capacities in the form of Dimasidsing? Dimasidsing was the election supervisor of Maguindanao who was gunned down for exposing Lintang Bedol's machinations and for refusing afterward to sign a document certifying the integrity of the votes there. He was a devout Muslim whose first love was teaching, and who ended up teaching this country an epic lesson in honesty.

My second suggestion is closely allied to the first. That is that heroism does not always have to end in death, it can always end in life. Even if, as these times guarantee, that is a life without appreciation or reward. Peace of mind and the knowledge of having done right by others are enough appreciation and reward.

I remember in this wise a question I got asked in a forum, which was how we might teach the kids love of freedom and democracy so that they would be willing to die for them. I said I myself did not measure love of freedom and democracy by anyone's willingness to die for them, I measured it simply by one's willingness to live for them. I said that for us Filipinos the second has always been harder than the first and constituted the more heroic act.

We have never had problems dying for freedom and democracy, we have always had problems living for them. We have never had problems risking life and limb to end tyrannies: we did that against Marcos, and we did that against Erap (why we don't do so against GMA I'll never know, but that is quite another story). But we have always had problems using life and limb to build a better society. At the end of every Edsa, we go back to the way we were, oblivious to wrongdoing, inappreciative of right-doing, and bestir ourselves only when things have gotten so bad we are forced like Death March prisoners to move. We have no problem rising to heights of glory for brief fleeting moments, we have a problem preventing ourselves from falling to depths of mediocrity for an eternity afterward.

We do not lack, too, for examples of people who lived for freedom and democracy and not just died for them. We have Francisco Gudani and Alexander Balutan who defied an illegal and immoral order for public officials not to speak out against their commander in chief and went on to testify about GMA's fake victory. We have Zosimo Paredes who resigned his post as head of the VFA monitoring committee in disgust over the government-engineered springing of Daniel Smith from jail. We have the officials of UST's nursing department and others who tried to void the results of the nursing exams last year for being tainted, whose foresight would later be borne out by the US authorities' refusal to give visas to those who were passed by the PRC.

These were moral acts, these were courageous acts—two ways of saying the same thing. Even more courageous than physical bravery is moral fortitude, even if the first impresses and the second is barely seen.

I have one last thing to add to the teaching of heroism to the kids. That is for us to change the ending of "Lupang Hinirang." It's time we stopped saying, "*Ang mamatay ng dahil sa iyo*," and said instead, "*Ang mabuhay ng para sa iyo*."

GMA's last three years

(First of two parts)

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO SOUGHT TO depoliticize the national agenda during the remaining three years of her administration when she indicated in her seventh State of the Nation Address on Monday that she would step down at the end of her term in 2010.

Her exit from the presidency was the keynote of her speech, which also outlined a vision of leaving a legacy of a Philippines by 2010 poised "to join the ranks of the rich countries in 20 years."

"It is my ardent wish that most of the vision I have outlined will be fully achieved when I step down," the President said. "It is my unshakeable resolve that the fundamentals of this vision will by then be permanently rooted, its progress well advanced and its direction firmly fixed with our reforms already bearing fruit."

In a bid to tranquilize the political atmosphere and put to rest suspicions that she intends to extend her stay in power after 2010, the President said: "They say the campaign for the next elections started on May 15, the day after the last. Fine, I stand in the way of no one's ambition." She was apparently referring to the early jockeying for position among a number of winners in the May midterm election for the 2010 presidential election. She also warned that she would not allow political bickerings to frustrate her economic programs. "I will not stand idly by when anyone gets in the way of the national interest and tries to block the national vision. From where I sit, I can tell you, a president is always as strong as she wants to be."

The President's statement about stepping down was greeted with skepticism by some opposition senators who noted that she merely said she would step down but "didn't say in 2010." This doubt was partly fostered by the fact that a week before the Sona, Ms Arroyo said, when asked about her plans when her term ends, "Who knows? I may run for Congress in my hometown." This skepticism reflects the credibility problem that has afflicted her presidency since she broke her pledge not to run in the 2004 election.

Unlike in previous Sonas, last Monday's did not mention at all constitutional amendments seeking a shift from the presidential to the parliamentary system, a proposal designed to rescue the President from a constitutional crisis that had been provoked by demands from protesters calling for her resignation.

The President delivered her seventh annual report to the nation in relatively more tranquil circumstances than the last two years and less threatened by impeachment action in the House of Representatives. When she delivered the Sona in July 2006, she had just preempted a coup attempt by disgruntled Marine contingents by clamping down a state of national emergency. On the very first day of the joint session of Congress in 2006, the opposition mounted an impeachment complaint in the House, the second in two years, which was subsequently quashed by the administration coalition before it could be sent to the Senate for trial.

No such threat emerged on July 23. The May election settled that issue and forestalled a third attempt. The House election results returned the pro-administration coalition's majority with even firmer control of the House, although the opposition won the majority of seats in the Senate, without really putting opposition members in control of the chamber.

The results of both elections have placed the President in a relatively stronger position to carry out the government's economic agenda. She is taking advantage of favorable external economic developments to give momentum to her vision of leaving an economic legacy. Although she has survived several coup plots since she took office in 2001, the President this year appears to have strengthened her hands in thwarting coup plots, although at the cost of resorting to repressive security measures, often resulting in the curtailment of political liberties of regime opponents.

The President delivered this year's Sona riding a strong surge in the economy, which posted a 6.9 percent growth in the first quarter of 2007, the fastest growth rate in 17 years. The stock market has hit an all-time high and the peso has hit a seven-year high against the US dollar. But critics fault the growth for failing to produce filter-down benefits to the poorer sectors and alleviating poverty.

Two-thirds of the Sona's 15 pages were devoted to an inventory of how much has been accomplished by last year's blue-print of the national infrastructure building program embodied in the five "super-regions" development plan, the centerpiece of the 2006 Sona. The 2007 Sona was, in some ways, a progress report on the 2006 plan.

The President said the 2007 infrastructure report "is just a sampler of our P1.7-trillion Medium-Term Investment Program." How to fund these projects remains a big problem. She said P1 trillion will come from state revenues, with tax reforms and "firm orders to BIR and Customs to hit their targets," and P300 billion from state corporations.

The World Bank has pointed out shortfalls in government revenue collection, which has fallen far below targets, and has warned that the solution lies in improving the collection effort instead of imposing new taxes.

The Sona appears to have foreclosed new taxes, because of the adverse political repercussions of such an option. The President said: "We were able to strengthen our economy because of the fiscal reforms that we adopted at such great cost to me in public disapproval. But I would rather be right than popular." *(To be continued)*

Not just a family affair

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SADLY, IT'S NO LONGER A RARITY. THIS PAPER reported that over the weekend, two boys, ages 9 and 3, died at home and allegedly at the hands of their parents, in the same neighborhood in Pasig City.

What makes the story unusual is that it was the boys' neighbors who reported the incidents and filed cases against the parents of the battered boys.

Fernando Alabado, 9, was found at the foot of the stairs of his home Sunday midnight, bloodied and unconscious and with his hands tied. A neighbor peeked into the house after she heard a loud thud and found Alabado's body. The neighbor said she and her siblings rushed the boy to a hospital but he was pronounced dead on arrival.

The day before, Bryan Gonzales, 3, died after his mother allegedly slammed his head against the wall. Neighbors went to the Pasig City police Monday morning to report the cause of the boy's death.

Before public awareness was raised regarding the rights of children and the responsibilities of parents, such incidents would have gone unreported. If police had come to investigate the causes of the boys' death, they would most probably have been met with blank stares or expressions of ignorance about what was going on with their families.

There was also the prevalent notion that what went on in the privacy of a home was the sole concern of the members of the household, and no one, not even neighbors or police, had the right to poke their noses into "family affairs," or disputes between spouses or parents and their children.

* * *

TIME was, police used to complain, that when they responded to reports of wife battering or child abuse, the victims themselves would be the first to deny the violence and even protect the suspected abuser. "What can we do?" a police official once asked at a public forum. "When we haul an abusive husband to jail, the first person to come to the station the next morning will be the wife who, even as she bears bruises and cuts from her mauling, will insist that her husband is innocent and that we should release him at that instant."

The prevailing attitude at that time was that it was the couple's and the family's "private" affair. But years of research and advocacy have shown that such "private" acts have a very public dimension: the deaths and poor health of abused women and children, and the perpetuation of a cycle of violence within the home that spreads from generation to generation, and spills out into the community through violence-prone individuals.

That's why I was heartened by the accounts of the neighbors' involvement in the cases regarding the deaths of the two boys. Of course, I wish the neighbors and authorities had stepped in before the violence had escalated and resulted in the children's deaths. Perhaps that is the good news behind this tragic story: that the boys' deaths would have made the neighbors resolve to step up their vigilance and get involved before another death occurred in the neighborhood.

* * *

OPENING today is a wonderful animated movie, "Ratatouille," about, of all things, a rat who loves to cook.

Remy is a rat who lives in the French countryside where his discriminating taste is laughed at by the rest of the colony until his father discovers that Remy's sensitive nose can help protect them from foodstuff tainted by rat poison. But when the colony is driven off its lair, Remy finds himself alone and lonely in the streets and sewers of Paris, with only a cookbook as a companion whose author, a famous deceased chef, popularized the notion that "anyone can cook!" Although the chef, who appears intermittently as a figment of Remy's imagination, perhaps did not imagine that "anyone" included a sewer rat!

Remy's culinary gift is discovered by Linguine, a dishwasher in the restaurant owned by Remy's inspiration. Dispatched to kill the rat, Linguine instead strikes up a partnership with Remy, who hides beneath the young man's toque and orchestrates his movements on the sly. The two conspire to build up Linguine's reputation as well as that of the restaurant, whose regained fame catches the attention of a famous food critic who's determined to close down, once and for all, the restaurant he had so publicly damned in the past.

Will Linguini and Remy save the restaurant from destruction? Will the rat be discovered? Will Remy ever be accepted again by his family and colony?

* * *

ALL these will be answered in the course of the movie, but on the way there, there's a highly entertaining dissertation on the world of restaurateurs and restaurant kitchens. There's a lightning-quick lesson on the hierarchy of a kitchen, and a demonstration of a frantic night in a restaurant kitchen where rats take on most of the cooking chores.

I told a friend, whose husband happens to be a hotel chef, to make sure she brought him to see the movie, as it is both a spoof of and homage to the culinary world: from the sensitive egos of chef patrons, to the pecking order in kitchens, from the snobbery over ingredients to the finicky tastes of customers.

It's also a touching tale of self-discovery and believing in oneself, even if one is a rat with not just an appetite but a sensitive palate. There's also the love story between the oafish Linguine and the female cook, who's a tough cookie justifiably proud of holding her own in the male-dominated world of fine cuisine.

It will also make most of the audience think twice, as we did, about trapping and killing rodents, especially in the kitchen where they tend to congregate. Of course, the possibility that in real life a rat would have Remy's nose and palate is remote—impossible, even. But they certainly have the appetite, as we have seen too many times!

How many islands does the Philippines have?

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ACCURACY OF THE FACTS AND FIGURES IN our textbooks has always been an issue. The good news is that many textbooks for science and math have been revised and, while still faulty at times, are generally considered much better in form and content than those in the so-called "soft" subjects like English, Filipino and history. It is not my habit nor perversion to go over textbooks in the sciences, so I'm not sure if these are really much improved than those in my field.

Unlike science and math, which are precise, history can sometimes be slippery, the interpretation of one and the same event changing depending on the historian writing the book. What bothers me is not that there are many different viewpoints, but rather that the textbooks have dated or conflicting "facts." The first step in the reform of our textbooks does not even concern interpretation. We need to make sure that our history or Hekasi textbooks are, at the very least, factually correct or at least updated.

All the current complaints regarding history textbooks are not new, if we are to go by an obscure and largely forgotten book by Pedro A. Gagelonia, "The Filipino Historian: Controversial Issues in Philippine History" (Manila: FEU, 1970). I found my soiled and pre-owned copy in a used bookstore 22 years ago. It was a miracle I picked it off the bargain bin because it had an atrociously designed cover, but I was drawn to the title thinking it would provide some clarity or the last word in contested territory. The work turned out to be a comparison of history textbooks, a feat in itself, and the point was to show some of the more common conflicting "facts."

It was both an eye-opener and quite amusing because the author seems to have sharpened his knife especially for the most successful textbook historian of all time, Gregorio Zaide. Straying from sober academic tone, Gagelonia does not seem content with thrusting a knife into Zaide. For full effect, he actually gives the knife a few twists before pulling it out.

Reading the first few pages of this book made me reflect on Filipinos as great spectators and "*uzi-seros*." We love a fight whether it is a neighborhood brawl or Pacquiao in Las Vegas. We even see this every day on the road when traffic builds up around any minor accident because everyone slows down, not only to get a closer look, but to make some snide comment.

I did not realize, for example, that textbooks differ with regard to the exact number of islands in the Philippine archipelago. When you ask Filipinos how many islands we have, the snappy answer to the stupid question is often a comment like, "Do you mean high tide or low tide?" The disturbing question has been effectively evaded by jest. If you press the person and ask, "All right give me the figures for both high tide and low tide," I'm sure the smart-ass will slink away. The most common figure given is 7,100 or 7,107 islands, but nobody knows where these numbers came from. For all I care, this figure can also be used to answer the great medieval theological question: How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

To make his point, Gagelonia plucked five examples from textbooks in use during his research. Agoncillo and Alfonso in the now classic "History of the Filipino People" state that the Philippines has "more than 7,000 islands and islets." Antonio Molina in volume 1 of "The Philippines Through the Centuries" says 7,083 islands, a figure I have not seen before. Gagelonia does not name anyone who cited 7,107 islands, but Alip in volume 1 of "Political and Cultural History of the Philippines" gives the usual 7,100 islands.

Zaide in most of his textbooks uses the same statistic—7,100 islands—but in his book "Catholicism in the Philippines," he gives 7,083 islands like Molina, a professor in the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas.

Reading this made me wonder if the number of islands changes depending on the use of the textbook in Catholic schools. It is understandable that different authors will come up with different numbers, but Gagelonia is right when he singles out Zaide for citing different figures in different books he wrote.

Historical method dictates that you get down to the primary source. Where did this random number come from? Nobody seems to know. How sure are we that we can even make 7,000 islands and islets if only 3,000, more or less, have been given names? At a party, I once asked some people working for the National Coast and Geodetic Survey as well as the National Mapping Agency to give me the exact figure. They too were surprised by the question. I presumed, wrongly of course, that employees from these agencies would have the exact figure at the tip of their tongue.

One last thing about current textbooks: Any study of the Philippines begins with its physical shape and other characteristics, yet most of the books do not come with a map of the archipelago; this has to be bought separately. And if a map is available, it is probably small, badly drawn and lacking in significant detail. If we cannot be clear on something as basic as the number of islands in the Philippine archipelago, what does this say about more complicated lessons in our textbooks?

* * *

Comments are welcome at aoocampo@ateneo.edu

Children's medicines

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE FIRST BILL FILED IN THE NEW CONGRESS WAS THE proposed Cheap Medicines Act. More accurately, the bill was re-filed since it had been proposed in the last Congress but didn't make it as a law. The bill went through rough sailing, facing tough opposition from multinational drug companies.

Among those lobbying heavily for passage of the bill are advocacy organizations working with the elderly. They've rightly pointed out that the country's expensive medicines have been a terrible burden especially for the elderly, and the families that have to foot their medical bills. Because the elderly are more vulnerable to chronic ailments, they have much greater dependency on medicines, many of which have to be taken on a daily basis. Even with the 20-percent discount offered to senior citizens, the monthly bills for medicines easily run into the thousands, wiping out their savings. The elderly are literally held hostage by the drug industry with a grim message: pay up, or suffer.

How costly is costly?

But sometimes we forget that there's another large segment of the population that's also held for ransom: the children. About 100,000 Filipino children die each year, many from diseases that are preventable and curable.

Let's tackle the preventable deaths first. Vaccines play a key role in preventing many of these deaths. Fortunately, the government does provide free BCG (for tuberculosis), DPT (diphtheria, pertussis or whooping cough and tetanus), OPV (oral polio vaccine) and hepatitis B vaccines. Additional vaccines for flu, chickenpox, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) have to be paid for with private physicians, and these can run into several thousand pesos. As far as I know, they're not reimbursable with PhilHealth or with private health maintenance organizations.

There are many other diseases that are not preventable through vaccines. The leading cause of illness and death among children are acute respiratory infections. Children are also especially at risk for gastrointestinal infections that can cause life-threatening diarrheas.

Aldrin Santiago, a pharmacist friend of mine, and his wife, a pediatrician, helped me to look at some of the costs of treating infectious diseases. The most common antibiotic used for respiratory tract infections is amoxicillin. More or less, for a seven-day treatment course, you would need two 60-ml bottles of the 125 mg/5 ml suspension, for a total cost of about P140 if you buy Amoxil, one of the brand name products.

In cases where there is resistance to amoxicillin, doctors might prescribe cefaclor, which is more expensive. A 60-ml bottle of the branded preparation Ceclor costs P274 while a 100-ml bottle is P466. For upper-class Filipinos, that may not seem a lot, but for most Filipinos, that wipes out more than a day's wages, if they are fortunate to even have a job in the first place.

Children also have their share of chronic ailments, asthma being the most common. A 60-ml bottle of Ventolin (salbutamol) costs P108, good for about four days. That's P25 a day. Consider yourself lucky if your child responds to the oral dose. Others have to use rotahalers, with one cap costing P80.

Even multi-vitamins can set back a family's budget. A 250-ml bottle of Enervon-C syrup costs P165. That's about 50 daily doses, each of which would be about P3. The poor will probably buy the smaller 60-ml bottle for P52, which works out to P4.30 for a child's daily dose, about the price of a pack of instant noodles that poor families use as a meal.

And if they find their child isn't gaining weight despite a voracious appetite, they'll probably think of intestinal parasites. But a single dose of albendazole suspension, sold under the brand name Zentel, is P47.

Cutting costs

If you work out unit costs, children's medicines are always more expensive than those for adults. This is because the medicines come as drops for infants and suspensions or syrups for older children. For example, a 15-ml bottle of Biogesic Drops costs P50. The bottle contains 1500 mg of paracetamol. This is equivalent to three Biogesic adult tablets, which cost P8.25!

My pharmacist friends say you can buy the adult preparations and then mix your own suspensions but there are problems here about making sure the ingredients are evenly mixed and giving the right dose to the patient.

A safer cost-cutting measure is to look for generic preparations, but the range of generic alternatives for children is actually smaller than that for adults. And where they are available, the differences in costs may not always be significant. For example, a 60-ml suspension of Amoxil (125 mg/5 ml) costs P69.50 while its generic equivalent from Ritemed is actually more expensive at P70.25. On the other hand, the 250 mg/5 ml version of Amoxil suspension is P102 while Ritemed's equivalent is P99.25.

With cefaclor, you have a choice. A 60-ml bottle of Ceclor (125 mg/5 ml) is P274.50, while Ritemed-Cefaclor is P137.50, exactly half the cost of the branded preparation.

Compare the following costs of salbutamol (60 ml suspension): Ventolin is P108, Asmalin P80 and Ritemed P48. Once when I was buying Ventolin at a drugstore, the woman next to me whispered: "It's cheaper at Children's Medical Center." She was referring to the parallel imports the government is doing, where the same brand name, brought in from India, costs less. These drugs are sold in government hospitals.

Parallel imports are in fact part of what the Cheaper Medicines Bill hopes to do. Before the last Congress ended, there were two versions of the bill, with different ways of dealing with patents and other controversial issues. The new Congress will have to tackle all these issues again, but in the long run, let's hope lawmakers will also begin to look at the long-standing question of production. We still are almost totally dependent on imports of pharmaceuticals. It's time for the government, or for a large Filipino company like United Laboratories, to come up with genuine competition against the multinationals. In Thailand and India, low-cost medicines from government and from local companies have forced multinationals to bring down the costs of their products.

The President referred to medicines in her State of the Nation Address last Monday, claiming that in 1999, only 11 percent of Filipinos said medicines were affordable, while today the figure is about a half. The President did not indicate who conducted the survey, but even if we take that 50 percent figure to be true, we still have to ask: Why does half of the population still have to suffer because they can't afford medicines?

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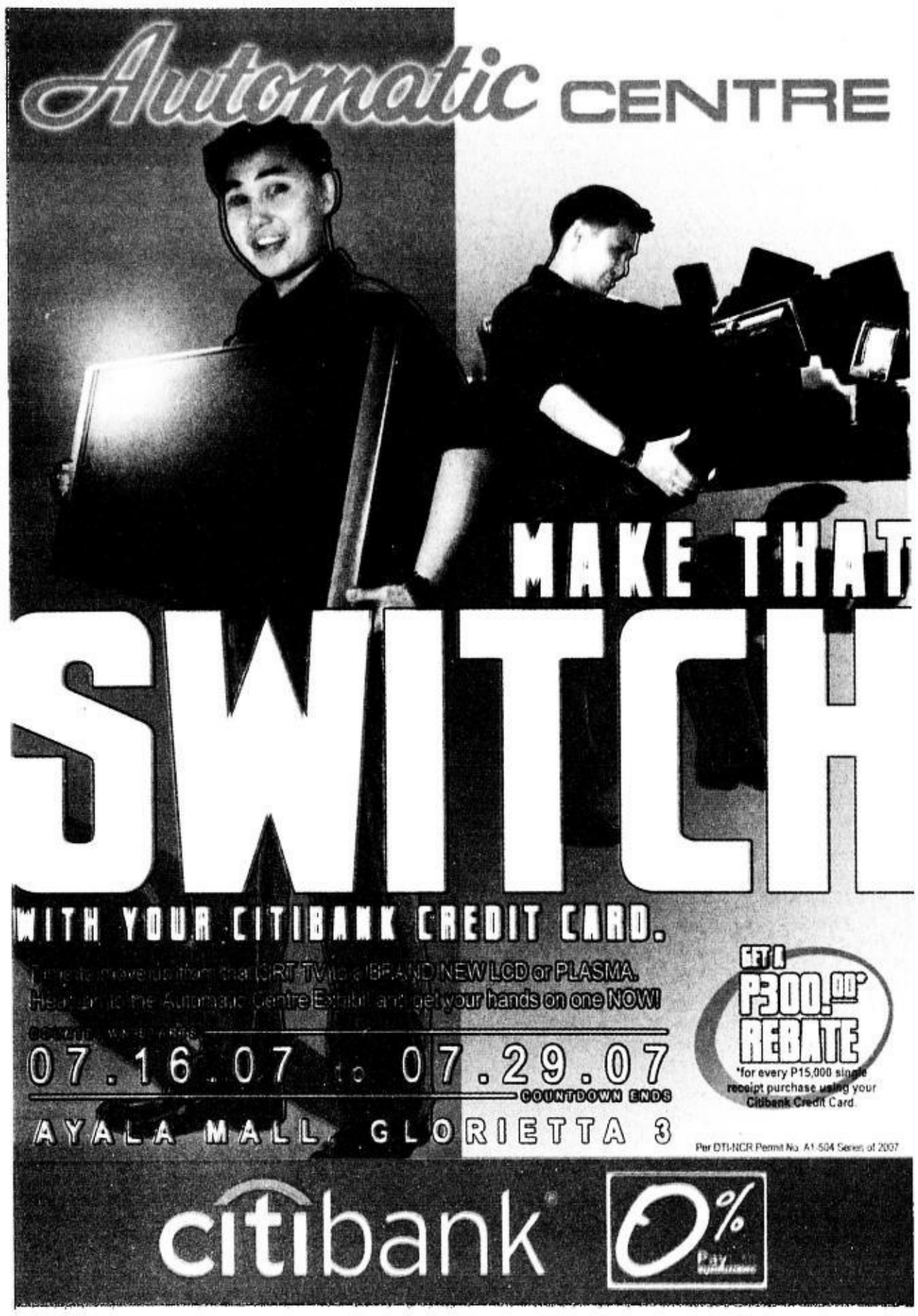

Atienza not fit to head DENR

I WOULD LIKE TO ADD MY VOICE OF DISMAY to those of the millions of environmentalists in this country on the appointment of former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. This appointment is obviously a political accommodation for yet another of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's loyal-but-now-unemployed supporters. And it is unfortunate that the DENR should be made to serve as a "catch-basin" for this kind of job-seekers. The DENR is not a minor and negligible agency.

Valid and credible qualifications, not to mention a solid track record in environmental protection, have been completely disregarded in this appointment. Atienza hardly has the track record in caring for and protecting the environment when he had the office and the power to do so. If he did not care for Manila's parks, could he be trusted to oversee the country's natural resources?

We urge this government to treat the environment with utmost respect by appointing only qualified people to oversee the DENR.

—MA. LUISA R. DE LEON-BOLINAO, Ph.D.,
associate professor 3,
History Department,
College of Social Sciences and Philosophy,
University of the Philippines,
Diliman, Quezon City

Scrap elections, auction off public offices

I PROPOSE THAT THERE BE NO MORE ELECTIONS. And the Commission on Elections should be replaced by a Committee on Bids and Awards (Combida). There should be a price tag for every elective position. The Combida should be composed of officials from the Bureau of Treasury and Commission on Audit. Sealed bids with cash or cashier's check in peso or dollar or euro, etc. should be accepted.

For the 12 senators, for example, the 12 highest bidders will be declared winners, their money duly receipted and turned over to the Treasury's general fund. As for the losers, their money will be returned but less 15 percent, for administrative charges. Each bidder will be entitled to have one observer, preferably the one who submitted the bid.

In this manner of selecting our officials, there will be no need for a liquor ban or a gun ban. There'll be no need to limit the official campaign period and expenses. There'll be no need for posters.

As for the barangay chairmen—*tenyente del barrio* before—our legislators have promoted them to barangay captains. We have in our midst so many types of captains—military captains, boat captains, port captains, captains of industry, etc. We should give the barangay chairman a new title: for him "Kamao," and for his only five councilors, "Daliri."

Manny Pacquiao, with his millions of pesos, can win the post of Kamao or he can bid for a higher position.

In order to level the playing field, relatives (within a given degree of consanguinity) of those who have been charged with plunder or driven out of office must submit a bid higher by 50 percent or 100 percent to win over a political upstart. I prefer a government run by the power of the peso rather than a government run by the power of a gun.

The party-list system should be scrapped. Party-list representatives have not contributed to improving the quality of legislation. They also served, first and foremost, their own selfish interests.

Each congressman should be made to realize that he is supposed to serve the entire spectrum of his constituents—from the "Buhay" to the *masakit* to the *patay*. From the "Macho" to the "bading" to the sex bomb. From the Left to the Center and the Right. From the cooperative members to the uncooperative and non-cooperative.

A process of recall for non-performing or corrupt officials should be adopted. When a vacancy is declared, another bidding should be conducted by the Combida. Thus, the government would be able to raise more funds.

I leave the other details to your more fertile imagination. I am just joking, seriously.

—ANTERO JUNIA JR.,
Calubian, Leyte 6534

A primer on antiviolence against women, children

RE RINA JIMENEZ-DAVID'S COLUMN TITLED "One woman's pain" (INQUIRER, 7/18/07), there is a book titled "Primer on the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004 (Republic Act 9262)." The book is very informative on women's rights to seek redress on violence committed by abusive spouses.

Written by Rowena V. Guanzon, the book was published by the Soroptimist International of Eastwood City (SIEC), subsidized by the Compañero Rene Cayetano Foundation, and supported with an educational grant from Pfizer Philippines.

This primer should be made available to government agencies charged with protecting the rights of women suffering from their spouses' physical and emotional abuse.

Violence against women is not excusable and should not be tolerated in a civilized and democratic society such as the Philippines.

—DELIA MOLO INTIA,
deliaintia@yahoo.com

Everybody has an oppressor deep within self

I READ NORMA P. DOLLAGA'S LETTER (INQUIRER, 7/14/07) and Conrado de Quiros' column (INQUIRER, 7/19/07) on "Tatsulok," a song popularized by Bamboo. I agree that the Human Security Act (HSA) is a threat in itself, and I cannot understand why we are so apathetic about it. The government has adopted an Orwellian way of curtailing the rights and privacy of the sovereign people.

De Quiros wrote that there is a higher court—higher than the Supreme Court—which is the "people's court" or "People Power." But how many People Power events do we need in order to have a better society? Even if we have Edsa 4 and 5, or Ayala 1, 2 and 3, or Lawton 1, 2 and 3, or Plaza Miranda 1, 2 and 3, our society will be the same society. Why? As Paulo Freire put it, "The structure of the oppressed thoughts are shaped according to the situation they are in."

This is the concrete reality classes A, B, C, D, E of our society are submerged in. The oppressed people aspire to become like the upper class. Since the upper class is the model, their consciousness is already structured or patterned to follow the upper class. For Freire, "It is not to become free men that they want agrarian reform, but in order for them to acquire land, and thus become landowners—or more precisely, bosses over the workers. This is because the context of the peasant's situation, that is, oppression, remains unchanged."

I do believe that all of us have already housed the oppressors within us and this yields the image of the upper classes. Parents do always tell their children to study hard. But for what? For them to be like "the others" someday. This is a manifestation that most, if not all, Filipinos have internalized the image of the oppressors.

Have we not learned from the great Marx? It is not consciousness that determines life but it is life that determines consciousness. The economic structure that members of classes A, B, C, D, E determines their line of thinking. Our arts, humanities, politics, religion, and even our philosophy, which for Marx are the superstructure, are determined by the economic substructure.

So where do we go from here? "*baliktarin ang tatsulok*"? Maybe, probably. But I believe that we will remain in the same situation until we have realized our own identity as Pedro, as Juan, as Maria, as Jose. But can we do this? When? Western culture has so permeated our very beings, it seems that we can no longer breathe without it; and, thanks to our idiotic leaders for leading us there. For now, I believe that the only way for us to wake up from this lethargy is a rapture, a jolt in our existential experience—an experience that all of us will remember.

—IAN RAYMOND B. PACQUING,
61 Lunes St., Landcom,
Sta. Mesa, Manila,
alakibo@yahoo.com.hk

MILF rebels are a bunch of cowards

THE AMBUSH THAT LED TO THE DEATH OF 14 Marines who were in search of the abducted Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi shocked and appalled me. It just showed us what kind of people the Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels are—cowards and traitors. They did not have the guts to engage government soldiers in a face-to-face battle.

That attack should not have happened in the first place for two important reasons. First, the government and the MILF are in peace talks, hence, a ceasefire should be taking place now. Second and more importantly, the MILF promised to help rescue Father Bossi.

That the Marines were in MILF territory is an invalid and unacceptable justification for the attack. The Marines were in the area not to engage the MILF in an armed confrontation but, precisely, to rescue Father Bossi. What territory is the MILF claiming?

I pity the families of the 14 Marines who lost their lives to save one life. It will be good for the country if President Macapagal-Arroyo orders an all-out war against the MILF, just like what President Joseph Estrada did several years ago.

—VINCENT DELA ROSA,
Cagayan Valley

'Balance' is not for genuine Christians

"STRIKING THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE two imperatives outlined in the President's declaration is a difficult act; this is where supportive public opinion comes in. It can help steady the administration's hand, and in the process show the country the way out of the pit of despair." (INQUIRER editorial, 7/16/07)

For a broadsheet as Americanized as the INQUIRER, I am always amazed at how Eastern its thinking really is. The INQUIRER always seeks a balance; and now, after the beheading of 10 Marines, the unprovoked ambush and the silly parrying with the media by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, it wants to strike a "balance."

What are we? Taoists? No, sirs, ma'ams. We are Catholics, Christians. Christians are not for balance. Christians must resist evil, as evil must be resisted, and murderers must be brought to justice and unreasoning savagery must be stamped out. Why insist on the Taoist concept of balance?

Don't the INQUIRER people believe in Jesus, in the God of the Old Testament? Christians do not believe in "balance." We are not Jedis! Anyone wants balance? Convert to Buddhism.

—BRIAN BROTARLO,
brian.brotarlo@lycos.com

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Room 201, Bonuan Apartello
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074)443-9255
Fax No. (074)443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
2nd Floor, Los Baños Bldg
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Telefax No. (052) 480-4182
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'Jueteng' returns on a bigger scale

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

OPERATIONS OF THE underworld lottery jueteng has shifted to high gear, resuming with ease and like they never really stopped in Central Luzon and Batangas, authorities and sources said.

The head of a campaign against the underworld numbers game said all it would take was for President Macapagal-Arroyo to publicly say that she wants jueteng stopped, something that Ms Arroyo hasn't done.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo hasn't stated any categorical statement or order to stop it," said Garrie David, executive director of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng (KBLJ).

The illicit gambling enterprise is on a bigger scale as a number of politicians start paying off "advances" to jueteng financiers who funded their election campaigns, said David.

The national leadership shared part of the blame, he said.

It's STL

He said KBLJ learned of the jueteng situation through its chapters and informants in various Luzon provinces.

But Director General Oscar Calderon, Philippine National Police chief, contradicted David's assessment.

"It is not full blown because [of competition from] the small town lottery (STL)," Calderon told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

STL is a government-sanctioned game started in February 2006 and designed to imitate jueteng.

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, the game's franchise holder, has given permit to 15 corporations.

David, in a consultation here, called the STL the "new face of jueteng."

But Calderon said jueteng exists in some parts of Luzon because of "guerrilla operators."

Some, he said, used STL as a "guise" for the underworld lottery.

"But let me tell you that the PNP is addressing the issue. We are not relaxing. Our campaign has been without letup," Calderon said.

"The 'Strike 1-3-2' policy remains," he said.

Calderon said under the policy, a chief of police is immediately relieved once an operation confirmed the existence of jueteng in a town or city. Similar jueteng operations in at least three areas guarantee the relief of the provincial police director. A regional director is relieved if jueteng was found in two provinces in his area.

> 'From what I know, Amy Tan is just the alias of Nora de Leon...'

Share of the pie

According to a top police source, some newly elected and former local officials are actually wrestling for control of jueteng operations in their areas.

The source said some local officials want full command over jueteng because STL has "weakened" the underworld game.

In Batangas, Lipa Bishop Ramon Arguelles said jueteng was revived by operators in the province barely a week after actress-turned-politician Vilma Santos took over as governor.

Arguelles said jueteng draws are held in the province during the last seven days.

The previous governor, Armand Sanchez, was identified in a Senate hearing as one of the country's biggest jueteng financiers. Sanchez had denied the accusation.

Bishop Arguelles identified a certain Amy Tan and a certain Nora as financiers of jueteng in Batangas. Both were not from Batangas, according to Arguelles, quoting his informants.

A ranking official of the Calabarzon police said he has the same information on jueteng as Arguelles does.

Matching information

The official named a certain Nora de Leon as the operator of the illegal numbers game in the province.

"From what I know, Amy Tan is just the alias of Nora de Leon," the INQUIRER source said.

The source said De Leon "had the blessings" of Santos' husband, former senator Ralph Recto, who is supposedly known as "Kano" and "Puti" among jueteng operators.

Reached through her mobile phone, Santos vehemently denied that she and her husband were tolerating jueteng.

She said she has a standing order to her provincial police chief to raid all jueteng dens.

"I will never let somebody revive jueteng in our province. I'm definitely against jueteng operations and all forms of illegal gambling," she said.

Bishop Arguelles said he won't think twice about severing ties with Santos should jueteng find its way back to Batangas.

"They know that I will not be happy if she fails to comply with her promise to make Batangas jueteng-free," the bishop said.

Pampanga crusader

Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio, a priest on leave, said he has thought of a formula to help stop jueteng and this would require jobs, the delivery of basic services, and police power.

"But we are not in a hurry. We are preparing the ground like basic services improvement, alternative livelihood programs, information dissemination," said Panlilio, whose election promise included the war on jueteng. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon and Leila Salaverria in Manila*

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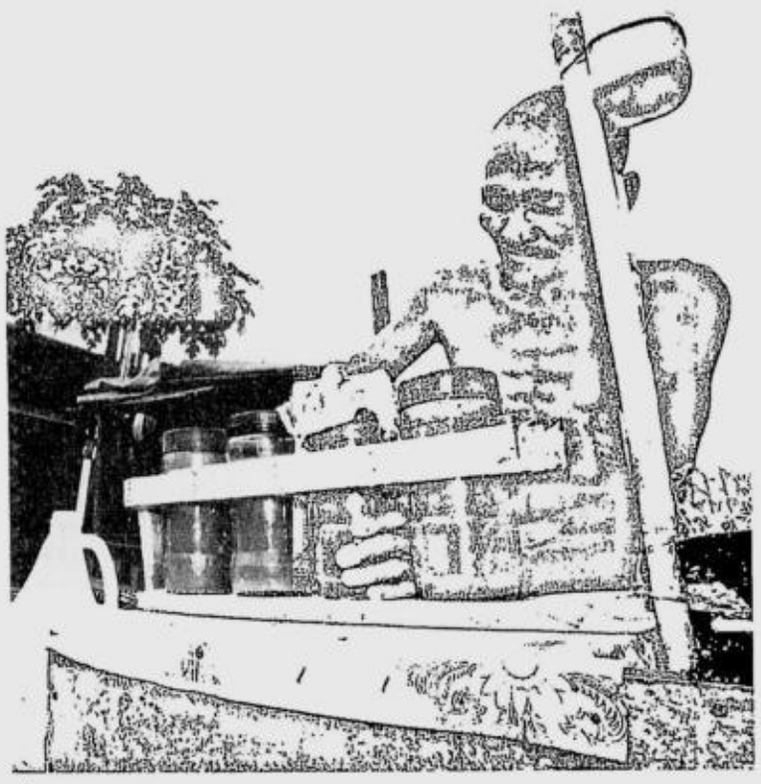


LIFE is pretty much the same for 45-year-old Felipe Solana. He used to sell fish balls in Pandacan, Manila from where they were evicted to be relocated in a housing project in Cabuyao, Laguna. Today, Solana still sells fish balls, but his fears of being evicted again are just memories now. He, however, says he prefers to sell fish balls in Manila because of one reason—there are more buyers there.
REM ZAMORA

Church, military link up to build houses for poor

CALAUAN, LAGUNA—ALBERTA ABINASA, 47, a widow, and her seven children used to live along the creek and under the bridge in San Andres, Manila, with other families whose main source of income was to sell wipe cloths and rags in the city.

Now, the leader of the Samahan ng mga Taga-ilalim ng Tulay San Andres and her members are beaming with relief after the recent turnover to them of 40 newly built houses here where they can now live with dignity.

Each of the 36 family-beneficiaries of the row houses, built against a lush mountainside, now has a 40-square-meter lot it can call its own with a toilet and bath and a non-leaking roof over their heads.

A cancer survivor, Abinasa thanked the Church, the military and other volunteers for making the houses possible, saying "the new site is the best we can have" even as they still have to scout for other suitable sources of income in their new location.

The sewing machines they used to make rags with were destroyed during the demolition of their shanties in February while the P5,000 provided each family had been spent while they waited for a relocation site.

Moving out

On April 11 and 17, they were hauled off to Calauan where the Metro Manila Development Authority decided to transport them.

In Calauan, they were housed in a large tent, where the young, adults and elderly were lumped together with all their belongings.

The government gave P36,000 as cash support to them.

They were left out to fend for themselves, but they were not exactly alone.

One night, during a heavy downpour and strong winds crushed their tents, the municipal government helped transfer them to the nearby buildings of the National Housing Authority as their temporary shelter.

After that, the municipality coordinated with Manila authorities and the Diocese of San Pablo in the relocation activities.

"From the time they arrived here in Calauan, it has been the dioceses of San Pablo and Manila and their parishioners that have been catering to the needs of the displaced families," said Fr. Rene Eriga, head of the Diocesan Social Action Center (DSAC) in San Pablo.

Scouting for the resources and personnel to build new houses for the families provided an opportunity for the parishioners to come together and help the former bridge dwellers.

Angel Ville

DSAC records showed that the row houses, called Angel Ville Housing, were built with support from Caritas Manila and the Philippine Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade based in Laguna.

Capt. Peter Garceniego Jr., civil military operations officer of the brigade and a friend of Eriga, recalled that the priest opened up to him the idea of involving the military in the construction of the houses, free of charge, one time they were having a meal.

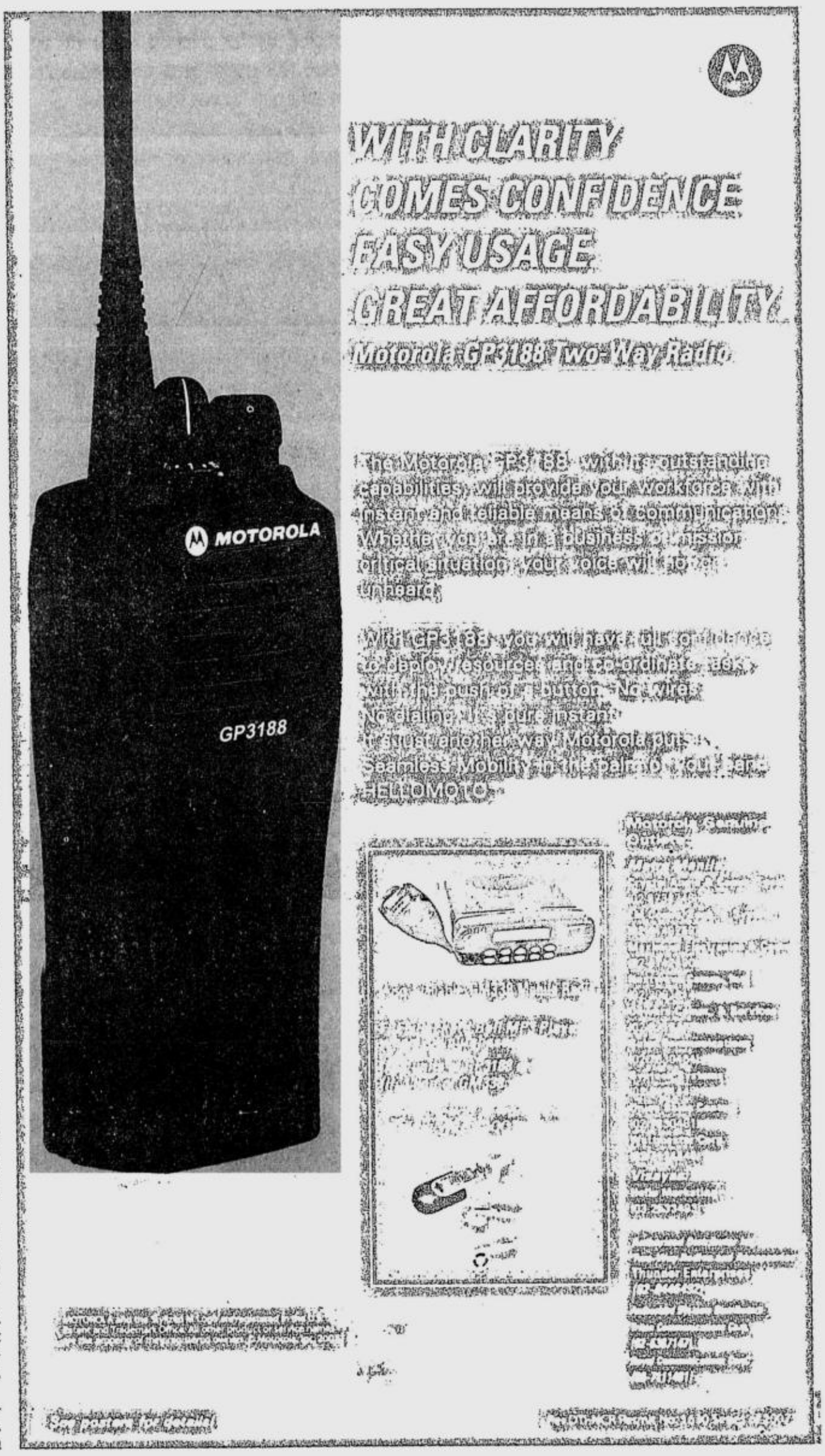
Garceniego, who believed he could get support for the plan from his superiors and peers in his contingent, told the priest at that instance that "the problem is as good as solved."

Col. Jorge Segovia, commanding officer of the 202nd IB, immediately ordered his men to prepare the logistics, construction crew and foremen, and the Army Engineering Brigade so the project could start.

On May 27, at least 60 AFP personnel, including Cafgu members, and 16 civilian volunteers, started work on the houses which were completed on June 29 in time for the inauguration the following day.

After a moratorium of one year, the NHA will charge each family P309 for the lot, a cost that was still being reviewed by NHA authorities in Manila, according to Fely Pueblas, NHA-Laguna estate management chief.

Despite the hurdles, those involved in the housing project found fulfillment in the experience.
Romulo Ponte, Inquirer Southern Luzon



12-yr-old killed in Army offensive gathered copra, abaca for parents

By Jani Arnaiz and Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

MAASIN CITY, SOUTHERN LEYTE —The military insisted that the deaths of a couple and their 12-year-old son in a mountain village was the result of a clash with communist rebels.

Police, however, said the military had alerted them of an operation in the village, indicating that there was no chance encounter between government soldiers and guerrillas.

Feliciano Labrador, his wife Leonora, son Anthony and a certain Jezrel died in what the military said was a gunfight between soldiers and guerrillas in Barangay Tinghub in Villaba, Southern Leyte.

The military said soldiers were on patrol when 10 guerrillas opened fire at them.

The soldiers said the guerrillas were in a meeting before the clash.

Chief Insp. Jose B. Yap, however, said police knew the Army was on its way to the village prior to the supposed clash.

"We were informed by the Army that they would be conducting an operation and we were warned to keep our police operatives away from the site," said Yap.

The Commission on Human Rights in Eastern Visayas said it would investigate the killings of the four people.

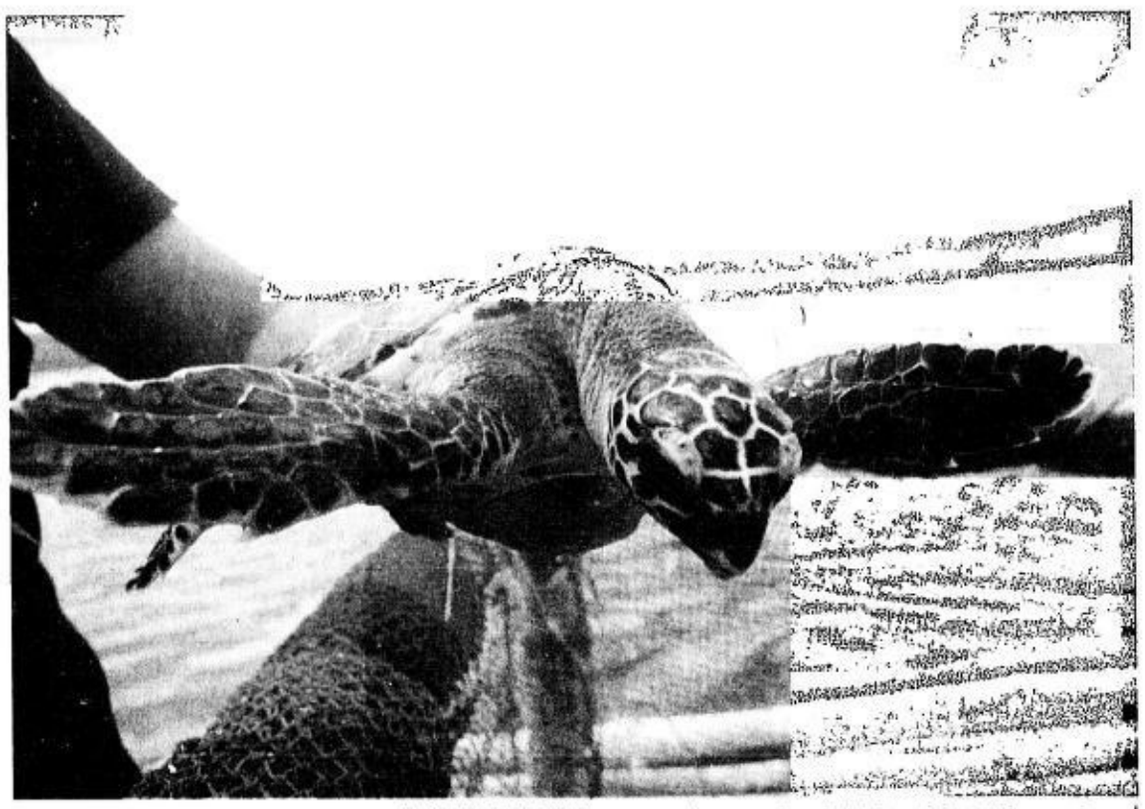
Lawyer Desiree Pontejos, officer-in-charge of the regional CHR, said her office would ask the military to provide a copy of its after operations report.

This early, the military maintains that it was a "legitimate operation" and it wasn't aware a boy was in the site.

Pontejos said Feliciano and Leonora were farmers, but neighbors described them as New People's Army members. The neighbors' information was unverified.

Lt. Col. Lope Dagoy, commanding officer of the 19th Infantry Battalion, said Feliciano was a former guerrilla but continued to be a "political organizer" in Tinghub.

A former NPA member also informed the military that Leonora and Anthony acted as couriers for the NPA, Dagoy added.



A GUIMARAS fisherman releases a hawksbill turtle into the sea in Sitio Lusay in Jordan town. The site was declared a marine turtle sanctuary because it was where these turtles breed.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

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No one held accountable for oil spill a year after

By David Israel Sinay
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—OVER A YEAR HAS passed since the oil spill in Guimaras but despite three separate investigations, charges have yet to be filed against those responsible for the country's worst environmental disaster.

Rafael Coscolluela, presidential adviser for Western Visayas, chided the Department of Justice for its failure to pursue charges against individuals who should be held accountable for the oil spill.

Aside from a DOJ investigation, the Senate and the special board of marine inquiry (SBMI) also conducted their separate inquiries, the results of which were endorsed to the DOJ, Coscolluela said.

"We asked (the DOJ) to already take the appropriate measures. But at this point in time, nothing has been done yet," he said.

The DOJ was tasked with consolidating the findings of the investigations and act on them.

Coscolluela revealed that last month, during a meeting of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, he raised the same concern to the DOJ representative but "the representative was not aware of the status of the case."

"I do not know (what happened). (The DOJ) could be gathering more evidence prior to the filing of charges. What charges to file and against whom, it is up to the DOJ," Coscolluela said.

Last year, the SBMI created a special body to determine the circumstances surrounding the sinking of MT Solar I, which was carrying 2.1 million liters of bunker fuel when it went down nine miles southwest of Guimaras Island on Aug. 11, 2006.

It was on its way to Zamboanga City from Bataan. The tanker settled at a depth of 640 meters, but not after leaking its fuel cargo.

Last February, the SBMI, in a report to the DOJ, found that overloading, lapses and incompetence triggered the sinking of the vessel.

The investigating body concluded that the tanker was overloaded and that incompetence on the part of the vessel's crew led them to sail into the middle of a storm.

The MT Solar I captain, Norberto Aguro, was not a licensed oil tanker master.

The SBMI also said in its report that Aguro disregarded regulations, policies and requirements for seaworthiness.

Petron, the firm that owned the MT Solar I fuel cargo, was liable for overloading the vessel, the SBMI said. Petron, however, said the amount of fuel in MT Solar I was well within its capacity.

The SBMI also asked the Maritime Industry Authority to file administrative charges against Sunshine Maritime Development Corp. (SMDC), owner of MT Solar I; Petron; and Aguro.

Coscolluela said something must come out of the investigation to determine the guilty parties.

"It should not be forgotten. We have learned our lessons. It should be corrected," he said.

Kin of OFW in Lebanon seek probe of her death

DIGOS CITY—RELATIVES OF AN overseas worker who allegedly committed suicide by jumping off a five-story building in Lebanon where she stayed asked Philippine authorities to investigate her death.

Elsa Silvano, sister of Anelyn Sayson, said they could not accept the report prepared by Lebanon authorities on the circumstances surrounding Sayson's death.

Lebanese authorities said Sayson committed suicide at midnight of June 30 by jumping off the building owned by her employer in Furn El Chebbak.

Silvano said Najib Khazaal, her sister's employer, also claimed she was mentally ill, which was not acceptable to the family.

Lebanese authorities quoted Khazaal as saying Sayson attacked Khazaal's wife before she jumped off the building.

Silvano said her sister was sane and could not possibly attack her employers.

She admitted that the forensic examination from Quidat General Hospital in Lebanon showed that her sister died because of the impact of the fall and that there was no indication she was sexually abused.

But Silvano said she and her parents, who live in Bukidnon, were asking for a deeper investigation because she could have been murdered.

She said the body of her sister, which arrived here last week, bore bruises and contusions. She said her hands also bore rope marks.

Silvano said her sister was enthusiastic about working in Lebanon and she could not have committed suicide.

Silvano said some of the things they wanted authorities to look into are the records of the recruiter, who sent Anelyn to Lebanon amid a government ban on deployment to that country. *Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

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INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

Quarry challenge stays on

By Tonette Orejas
Floridablanca, Pampanga

THE AMOUNT, P11.6 MILLION, CARRIES A heavy fact. That was how much the quarry industry in Pampanga, involving not more than 20 operators, paid in sand taxes in just 10 days until July 13, treasury records showed.

This meant that, on the average, the provincial government raked in P1 million daily in revenues. If that trend continues, the potential income can reach P300 million, private sector leaders in a quarry watchdog estimated.

This meant, too, that the sand spewed out by Mt. Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions, is truly a mineral of public wealth.

What can initially be gleaned from these, said Gov. Eddie Panlilio, is that there is a gold mine in quarry.

The figures are burdensome, though, because they raise a lot more questions in the almost 10-year-old controversy.

If the alleged quarry scam were a contest of numbers—the way Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao had done it in six years—the P11.6 million in revenues collected in 10 days would win.

The recent revenue was more than the P10.5 million collected in 2004, in the transition year of Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid and his son, former Gov. Mark Lapid. It was also bigger than the P29.1 million generated in 2006.

Guiao said the "instantaneous" increase under Panlilio further put to test those numbers.

Tony Buyson, president of the Floridablanca Pampanga Quarry Association and one of the witnesses in the 1998 graft case filed by the National Bureau of Investigation against the elder Lapid, declined to comment when asked on the accountability of the two former governors.

The Sandiganbayan dropped that case in July 2004 when the Ombudsman filed a motion to withdraw the information. The House committees on environment and good government did not press charges.

The Lapids, in past interviews, denied stealing from public funds, attributing the poor collections to low demand for sand or irregularities at the level of field personnel called checkers.

No graft

For Floriano Rivera, former project manager of the NRDC, the Panlilio administration must focus on eliminating graft, now that it had proven that the quarry industry was a gold mine.

"He is running it well," Rivera said of Panlilio's system.

Panlilio introduced two basic changes. Receipts are paid in advance at the provincial treasurer's office, not on roadside quarry checkpoints.

Assigned there are 90 new checkers who validate the authenticity of receipts. Most of them worked as volunteers of Panlilio during the election campaign.

THESE receipts, when faked, will lead to the stealing of quarry revenues for Pampanga.

TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Strict system

"Taking bribes is prohibited. Father [Panlilio] will be angry," Jayson Sison, a volunteer, said when interviewed at the San Fernando checkpoint.

An INQUIRER tour of seven sand-rich towns on the night of July 16 showed that the capitol, on a 24-hour, three-shift schedule, has maintained a maximum of four checkpoints in every town's entry and exit points.

Operating in a set of two checkpoints, the first validates the receipts, writes in the logbook the serial number of the receipts and the licensed plates of trucks and marks the receipts as "used."

The second checkpoint counterchecks the validated receipts, logs in again the serial number and licensed plates and cuts the stubs from the receipt. The name of the operator and the licensed plate are written on the stubs.

The area supervisors tally the serial numbers on the stubs with those on the master list of receipts. These are valid only for three days.

What was clear during the visit was that no checker handled financial transactions, which are now managed by the treasurer's office.

Portrait of an artist sitting in a summit

By Kidlat Tahimik

HOY, *TATAY*, YOU'RE ON THE FRONT PAGE OF today's INQUIRER," says my son, waving a July 18 issue of the newspaper. I grab it, thrilled like in the song "On the Cover of the Rolling Stone."

I scrutinize the half-page spread of delegates to the Summit on Extrajudicial Killings. "*Wala naman, eh*," I say. Laughingly, he points to a pixel cluster that must be me, "'*Yan ka*, sitting behind Mr. Vizconde, *di ba*?"

At the back of the throng of distinguished delegates, my gray hair and forehead are recognizable (only by me, of course) with my eyes covered by a sectoral nameplate reading "Diplomats" like black bars to conceal the identity of a secret witness. My portrait sitting in the summit constituted 1/100th of the plenary photo.

DAYTOY TI AMIANAN

Last week, I was sitting in the historic summit called by the Supreme Court to discuss the spate of extrajudicial killings. So I was surrounded by high court justices, legal luminaries, military generals, Cabinet officials, academics, activists and media.

Twist of cosmic fate

What was a Baguio artist doing there? Call it a twist of cosmic fate. My son Kidlat de Guia was part of a film team to document the event. Due to an upset stomach, he begged off on the first day of the summit. So my name was submitted as possible substitute cameraman.

The secretariat filed the added name among the participants rather than classified it among media observers. So as fate would have it, I was in the summit, assigned to the discussion group chaired by Justice Leonardo Quisumbing.

He introduced me as someone "whose life had become a legend," referring to my roller-coaster career from a drama major through a Wharton Master of Business Administration degree on to a Paris economist returning home as a Baguio filmmaker and ending as a G-stringed adopted son of Ifugao.

That intro gave me confidence to speak my mind when he called for my opinion. I warned the group that as a nonlawyer, I knew little of the legal niceties previous speakers had discussed. As a layman, I was not even well-versed with my constitutional rights.

Just like the unique perception of the child seeing the emperor's new clothes, could they consider my view of unabated extrajudicial killings as evidence of the high "water table of violence" in this country?

My metaphor needed explanation. A digger of wells looking for water drills in an area where a higher water table exists under the ground. This means the probability of producing water is higher where the saturation of water underground assures an easy-to-tap supply. Thus, a bubbling spring indicates a water table that has reached the surface soil.

Extend that metaphor into the realm of cultural habits: Consider a community that is prone to physical violence like in a poor congested zone. Does this not show a high-water table of macho culture?

Machismo is fueled by an overdose of Hollywood images where issues are settled by gunfire, salvaging, torturing, snuffing out witnesses, etc. Rambo films, Dirty Harry movies or Asiong Salonga tough guy tactics promote power emanating from the gun.

Multiplier effect

Review our headlines that draw attention to Kuratong Baleleng rubouts, Rolito Go scenarios, Vizconde cold-blood youth massacres, military shoot-to-kill behavior in Mendiola/Luisita or the recent Abu Sayyaf beheading Marines.

These stories become blockbuster movies and thus have a multiplier effect on the rising tide of violence in our culture. Might this not have bearing on the behavior of arresting officers and overzealous military, making them more prone to snuffing out journalists and activists? Or Abu Sayyaf turning brutal.

All these are at the expense of the old *kapwa* culture wherein our compassion for the other served as a *preno* (brake) to a ferocious animal side in us.

It looks farfetched and hard to prove. Everybody knows how common are the images today of someone drawing a gun, brandishing high-powered rifles to intimidate, pistol-whipping a weaker human or the villain beating up the hero.

On the bus to Baguio, the TV show "Lupin" was imposed on me and my fellow passengers. In a 30-minute episode, there were at least 25 scenes of guns aimed threateningly: By a one-eyed young hero, later by his girlfriend, then by uniformed Marines, by the gang boss, by the bodyguard, etc. Almost every minute, somebody was fondling a gun.

I asked the delegates whether political murders and disappearances are evidence of this. The ease of summary executions and the arrogance of assassins show how the Philippines will make a new Guinness Book benchmark! At the rate we feed our youth these images, we will remain the global gold medalist in extrajudicial rubouts.

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Built-In Clock with Alarm on LCD	○	○
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TAM Function		
TAM	○	○
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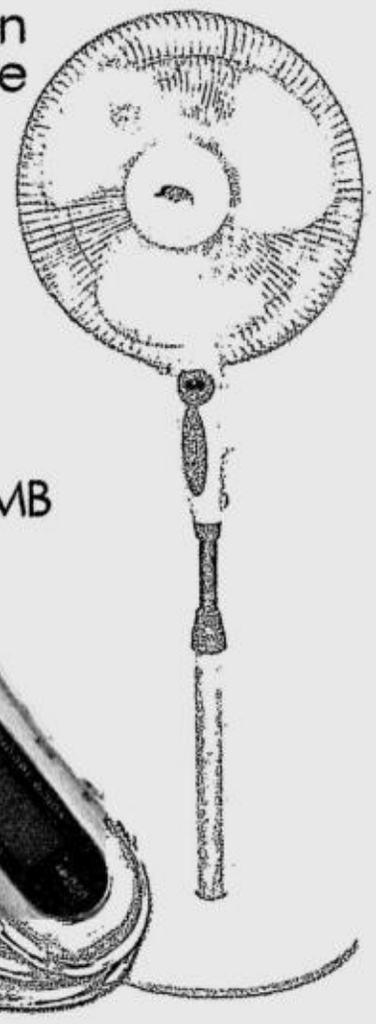

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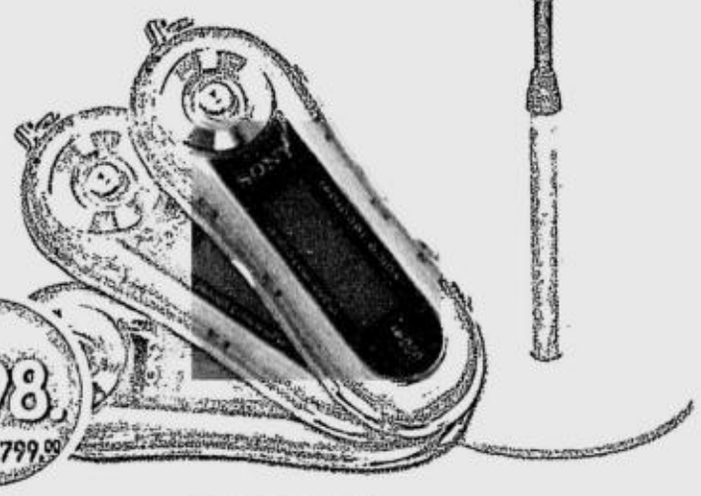

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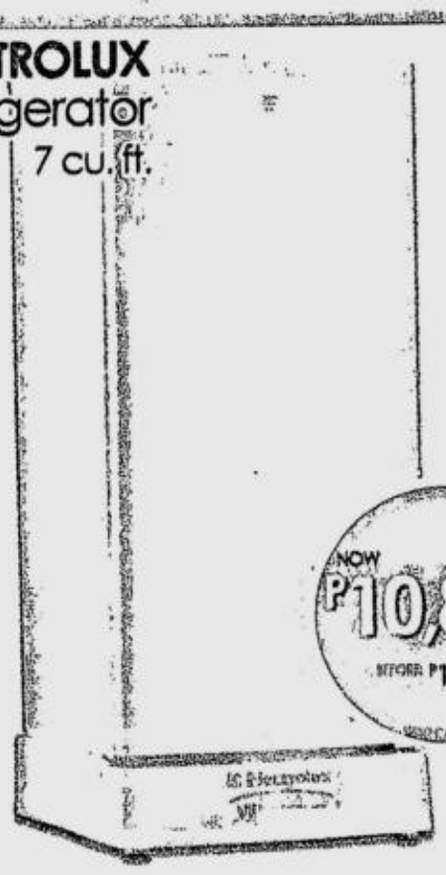

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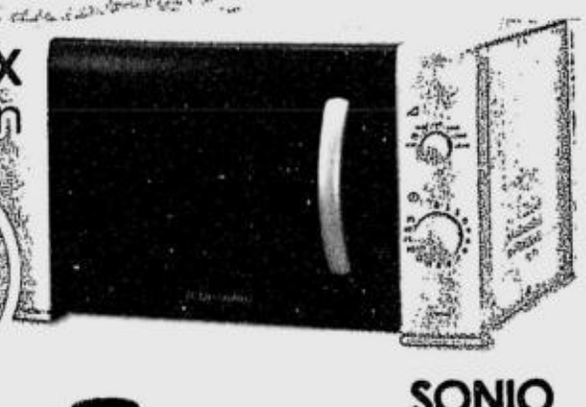

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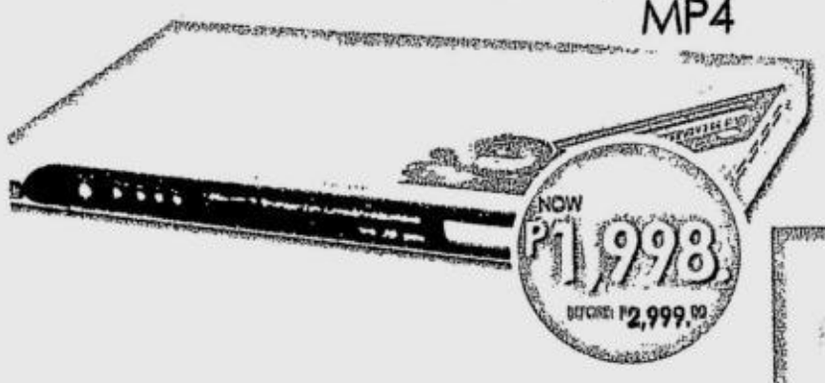

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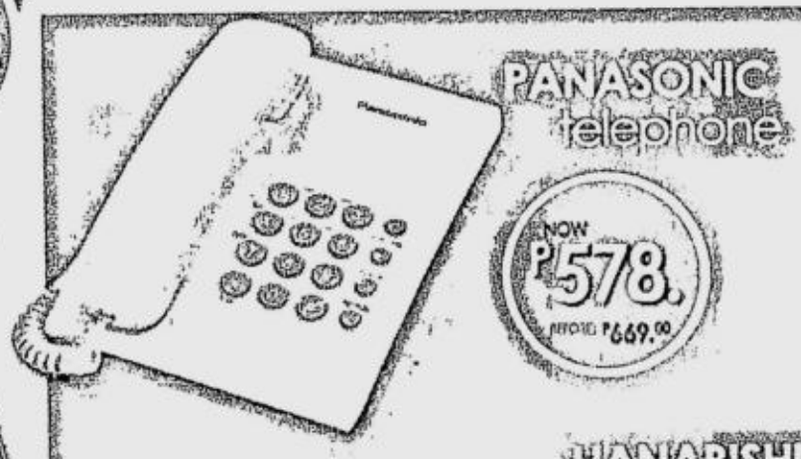

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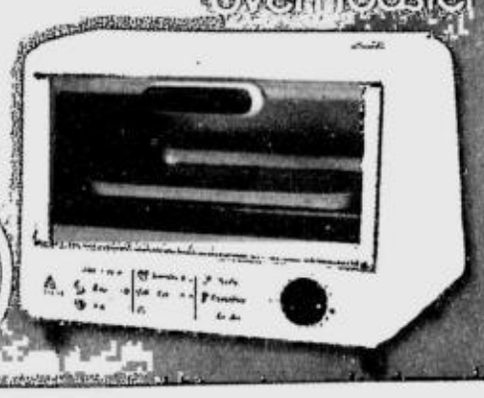

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Villar: GMA is a lame-duck President

From page A1

specific about who she was referring to. "There are a lot of interpretations when she says if someone would get in the way. But we are an independent Senate, it's not always possible for us to say yes, yes (to whatever she wants). We might do that at home, but not in the Senate," Villar said.

The senators also demanded that Ms Arroyo provide a categorical statement on her exit from Malacañang.

Villar said he continued to doubt Ms Arroyo would step down and that she might prolong her stay in office through a shift to a unicameral system.

Sen. Francis Escudero said the opposition had taken Ms Arroyo's declaration with a grain of salt, pointing to her Rizal Day statement that she won't seek a term extension in 2004.

Escudero said that Ms Arroyo was probably realizing that her stay in power was nearing its end. "She feels that she is slowly becoming 'a lame-duck president, she has a lot of allies that have abandoned her and refused to follow her," Escudero said in a radio interview.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told the INQUIRER that Ms Arroyo wanted only to convey the message to the presidential hopefuls in 2010 that "I won't get in your way, so don't get in my way, too."

Unanswered questions

"Her speech was meant to show her self-confidence, that she won't be a lame duck. They (opposition) have to help the administration, otherwise they might not achieve what they want," Ermita said.

Sen. Mar Roxas scored Ms Arroyo for lavishing praise on local government officials while leaving unanswered the question of where she would get the money to bankroll their proposed infrastructure projects in the face of dwindling tax collections. *(Story on Page A1.)*

"The people deserve to know the full details of the finance department's plan to meet its revenue shortfall. Which prime government assets will be sold, for how much and on what terms? Who are the prospective buyers? Will the bidding process be cut short just to meet the deadline?" Roxas said.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada concurred with Roxas.

"Are we to expect another round of new taxes and increases in charges, levies, rates, duties and other fees for government services and transactions? Or are we going to borrow again? The bottom line in all these is money. The rest are just plain conversation," Estrada said.

Sen. Loren Legarda said that she came out of the Batasang Pambansa still wondering how the President intended to achieve her targets.

"People don't care about the projects that she wants to build, what people like Mang Ambo care about is whether there will be food on the table or not. Sadly, the President failed to address this," said Legarda.

Quiet life planned

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye sought to squelch speculation about Ms Arroyo's intentions, saying she was bent on leading a quiet life at the end of her term.

"There should also be no doubt that the President wants to end her term in 2010 with a solid foundation that her successor can continue to build on," said Bunye.

Bunye was asked who the President was referring to toward the end of her address on Monday when she said she expected her economic programs to bear fruit and that whoever succeeded her, "he or she will have an easier time."

'Loren's face lights up'

"I saw Loren's (face) light up," Bunye said.

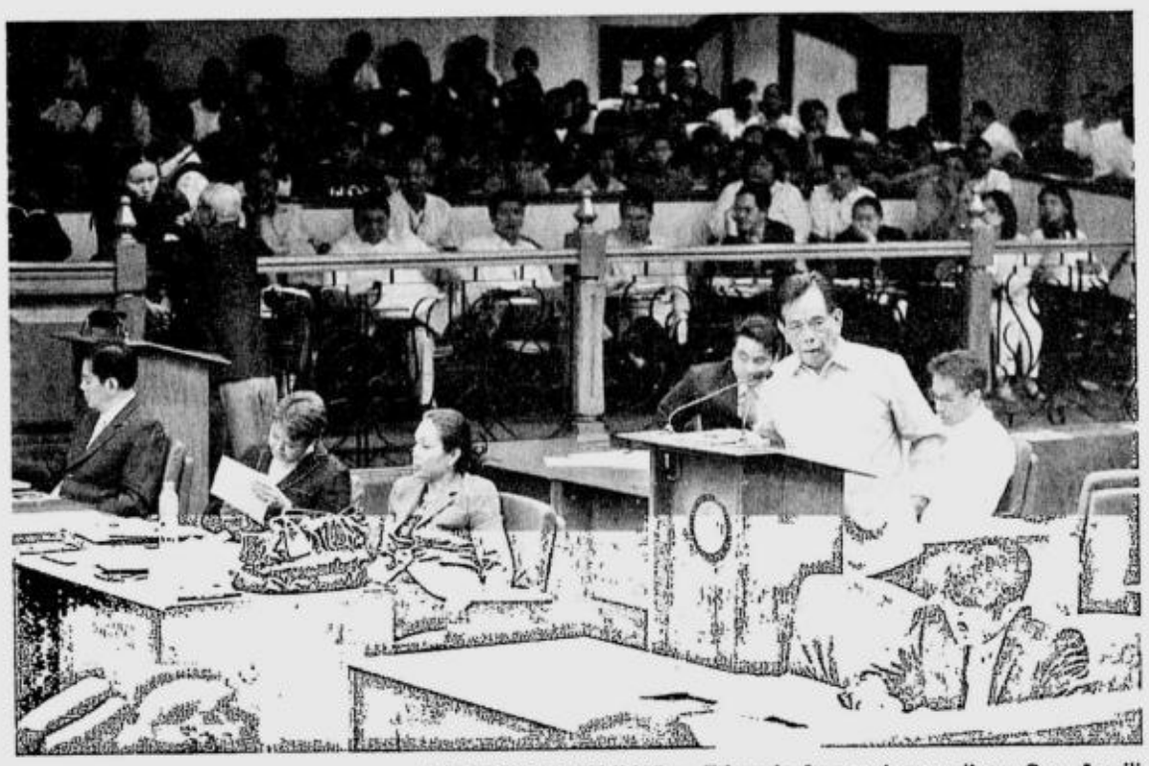
Legarda is one of only two senators to twice top the senatorial races, the other being former Sen. Jovito Salonga. She is the only woman among the current crop of presidential wannabes in the Senate who include Villar, Roxas (who topped the 2004 Senate race), Richard Gordon and Francis Pangilinan.

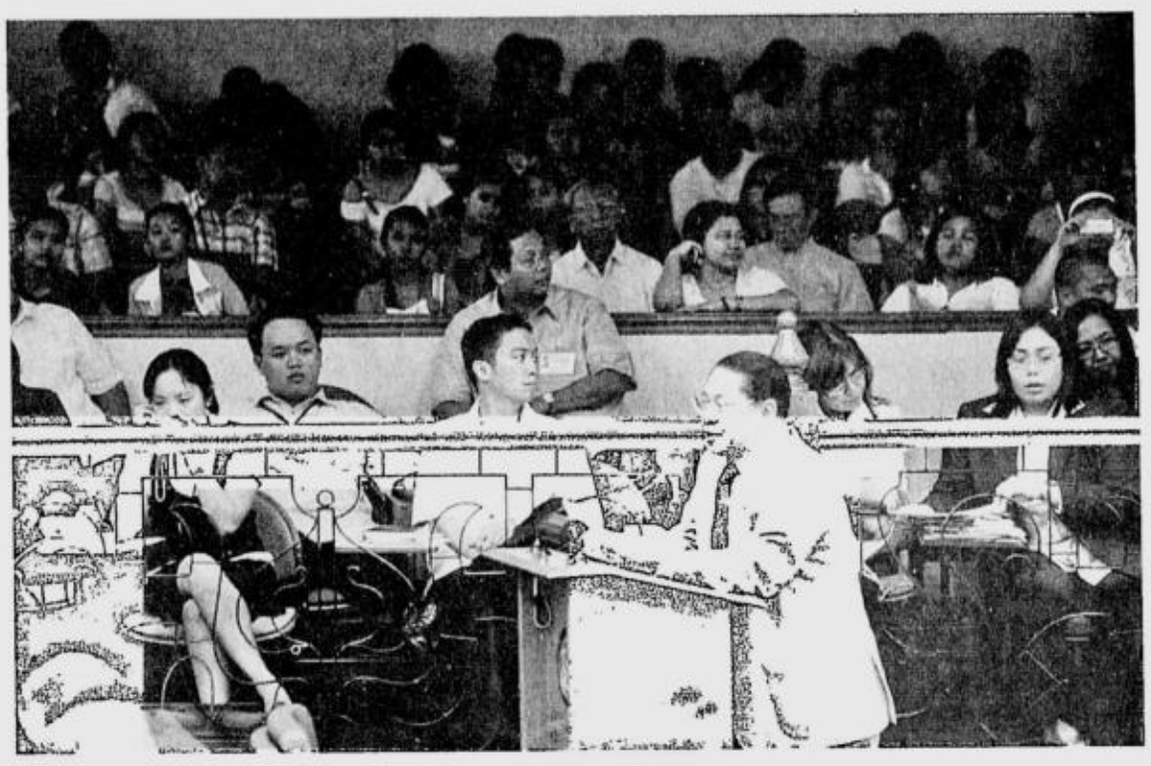
Asked about her presidential ambition, Legarda said: "My political strength comes not from any political position, but it emanates from the Filipino people."

Mixed signals

Ms Arroyo has given mixed signals on her political future. In a speech at the Subic Freeport last Wednesday, she joked: "Who knows? I may run for Congress in my hometown."

Asked to elaborate, Bunye said the statement that Ms Arroyo issued on Monday said it all. Later, he sent the INQUIRER a transcript of Ms Arroyo's interview with Reuters on July 12 where she said when asked what she would do at the end of her term: "I haven't thought that far ahead; I am only focused on governing and improving the economy."





LET TRILLANES IN: Sen. Edgardo Angara interpellates Sen. Aquilino Pimentel on his resolution to allow Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV to attend Senate sessions and petition to place the detained senator in the custody of the Senate. *(Story on Page A2.)* ROGER MARGALLO

Senators see red over blue ribbon committee chair

From page A1

dent by the administration-led coalition in the Senate on Monday, Villar has been under fire. Supporters from the opposition and administration have threatened to abandon him if he makes an unacceptable choice.

"We had already talked even before the Senate President election that the blue ribbon committee should go to the opposition," Escudero said. "That's not a condition, it's just what I want to happen."

Part of horse-trading?

Escudero said that "probably, I would have thought twice, I would have had second thoughts" on his support for Villar as Senate President. Escudero, however, stressed that he did not know if the blue ribbon committee was part of Villar's horse-trading with the administration for securing the Senate President post.

"The opposition must take charge of the blue ribbon because it is the one that will investigate government malfeasance," said Escudero, who cited Sen. Panfilo Lacson and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. as among those interested in the post.

Despite being reduced to the minority bloc, Pimentel said that the blue ribbon chair should come from the ranks of the eight opposition members who did not join the administration-led coalition in the Senate.

"The blue ribbon should be given to any of the eight members here because if you look at the function of the committee, it is designed to ferret out wrongdoing by the administration. If you are an administration senator holding that position, chances are the truth will not come out," Pimentel said during the caucus of the opposition at the Manila Polo Club on Sunday.

Aside from Pimentel, those in attendance were Lacson, Legarda, Mar Roxas, Rodolfo Biazon, Jamby Madrigal, Benigno Aquino III and a representative of Antonio Trillanes IV. Pimentel excluded Villar, Estrada, Escudero and Alan Peter Cayetano from the opposition after they struck an alliance with the administration bloc in the Senate.

Litmus test

Roxas said the blue ribbon committee would serve as the "litmus test" of whether the Senate would be able to carry out the mandate of the people who voted overwhelmingly for the opposition in the last elections.

"The people's mandate is clear in the last elections. The people are looking for a Senate that is independent and will serve as a counterbalance to the excesses of the executive," Roxas said.

Lacson said that an administration senator could not work as a fiscalizer because he was bound by the "stringent" rules.

High court defers action on TRO against terror law

From page A1

three petitions filed last week questioning the HSA for allegedly being unconstitutional, violative of human rights and having a flawed definition of terrorism.

The HSA took effect on July 15 amid fears that it would be used to crack down on political dissenters and lead to human rights abuses.

One of the petitions against the HSA was filed jointly by, among others, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera, civil society leader Renato Constantino Jr., retired Col. Gerry Cunanan, film director Carlitos Siguion-Reyna, and the militant groups Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Gabriela, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, League of Filipino Students, Health Alliance for Democracy and Alliance of Concerned Teachers.

Two other petitions were filed by Southern Hemisphere Engagement Network Inc. and lawyer Soliman Santos, and the Kilusang Mayo Uno, National Federation of Labor Unions-KMU and Center for Trade Union and Human rights.

Those named respondents in the petitions were President Macapagal-Arroyo, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, National Security Adviser and Acting Defense Secretary Norberto Gonzales and Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon.

9 CA divisions

The Supreme Court has also designated nine Court of Appeals divisions to handle cases involving terrorism and conspiracy to commit terrorism, as well as requests for wiretapping, which is allowed under the HSA.

In an administrative order dated July 16, the tribunal assigned the first, second and third divisions to handle cases in Metro Manila and Luzon; the 18th, 19th and 20th divisions for cases in the Visayas, and the 21st, 22nd and 23rd divisions for cases in Mindanao.

It also said the appellate court divisions should see to it that human rights were not violated.

"There is need now to designate the specific divisions of the Court of Appeals which shall handle the cases mentioned to ensure that in the implementation of the Human Security Act, respect for human rights, which shall be absolute and protected at all times, shall not be prejudiced," the order read in part.

It was signed by Chief Justice Reynato Puno and Justices Leonardo Quisumbing and Consuelo Ynares-Santiago.

Marquez said the high court designated the appellate divisions upon the request of Gonzalez and Puno.

Sunday Inquirer . . .

From page A1

readers, edging out Panorama with 531,000 readers (48 percent) and Starweek with 202,000 readers (18 percent).

The total number of readers exceeded 100 percent because some respondents read two or more magazines.

The Nielsen survey also found that SIM appealed more to women, who comprised 69 percent of the magazine's total readers.

By age group, SIM attracted both adults and young people, with the following breakdown: readers aged 20 to 29 comprised 31 percent of readership; readers aged 10 to 19, 26 percent; readers aged 40 to 49, 18 percent; readers aged 30 to 39, 17 percent, and readers aged 50 and up, 8 percent.

Now on its 21st year, SIM was launched in March 1986 with current INQUIRER editor in chief Leticia Jimenez-Magsanoc at its helm. It became a broadsheet in February 2002 and was reformatted as a full-color glossy magazine in October last year. It has since focused on special themes every week.

SIM is staffed by publisher Leica Carpo, executive editor Pennie Azarcon-de la Cruz, associate editor Ruel de Vera and staff writer Eric Caruncho.

Nielsen's 13th Media Index covered 2,550 respondents aged 10 years and older from all socioeconomic classes in 22 cities in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. It used multistage random sampling and had a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

Last month, Nielsen also released survey results that showed the Philippine Daily Inquirer was the most read broadsheet in the country, with an estimated 1.47 million readers. Manila Bulletin came in second with around 1.27 million readers, while the Philippine Star came in third with an estimated 1.15 million readers.

Nielsen Media Research is one of the leading providers of television audience measurement and advertising information services worldwide. It used to release the Media Index annually, but in 2006 it started conducting the readership survey twice a year. *Inquirer Research*

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Congress to push cheap medicine bill

By Christian V. Esguerra

A PIECE OF LEGISLATION THAT WOULD LOWER medicine prices in the country will be resurrected and finally passed soon.

"It can be passed in 45 days," reelected Speaker Jose de Venecia said yesterday of the Cheaper Medicines Act of 2007, which ran into roadblocks in the last Congress.

De Venecia said the key to passing the measure in the new Congress would be to arrive at a consensus between the groups of Sen. Manuel Roxas II in the Senate and of Iloilo Rep. Ferjenel Biron in the House of Representatives.

Roxas authored Senate Bill No. 2263 which focused on key amendments to the Intellectual Property Law to allow, for instance, the parallel importation of patented drugs.

The House, with Biron's group taking the lead, came up with its own version of the act known as House Bill No. 6035. Biron and his group said the House bill was a much stronger version of the Roxas measure.

But HB 6035 failed to make it to the bicameral conference committee—where the Senate and House versions would have been consolidated—after the lower chamber failed to pass it.

The reason: A lack of quorum.

Attendance program

"In one week, we will submit a powerful program to ensure attendance, with punitive actions against those who are habitually absent," De Venecia said.

He said the attendance program was being prepared by Majority Leader Arthur Defensor and Representatives Michael John Duavit of Rizal, Juan Edgardo Angara of Aurora and Amelita Villarosa of Occidental Mindoro.

Iloilo Rep. Janette Garin, one of the proponents of HB 6035, yesterday said the time frame set by De Venecia for the passage of the price measure was doable.

But she said the measure need not be the Cheaper Medicines Act but a "new" bill filed by Biron which seeks to lower medicine costs through a price regulation system.

Garin said the proposed Drug Price Regulation Act would lower the cost of medicine by setting price "ceilings." An antibiotic, for instance, can't be sold for more than P10 if this was the price set by the act.

The system, Garin said, would be more effective in lowering drug prices.

She said congressmen backing the new bill were optimistic it would pass this time, supposedly following commitments of support from Senate President Manuel Villar and Senators Loren Legarda and Panfilo Lacson.

"Senator Roxas really doesn't want the drug price regulation system so we approached the other senators," Garin told the INQUIRER.

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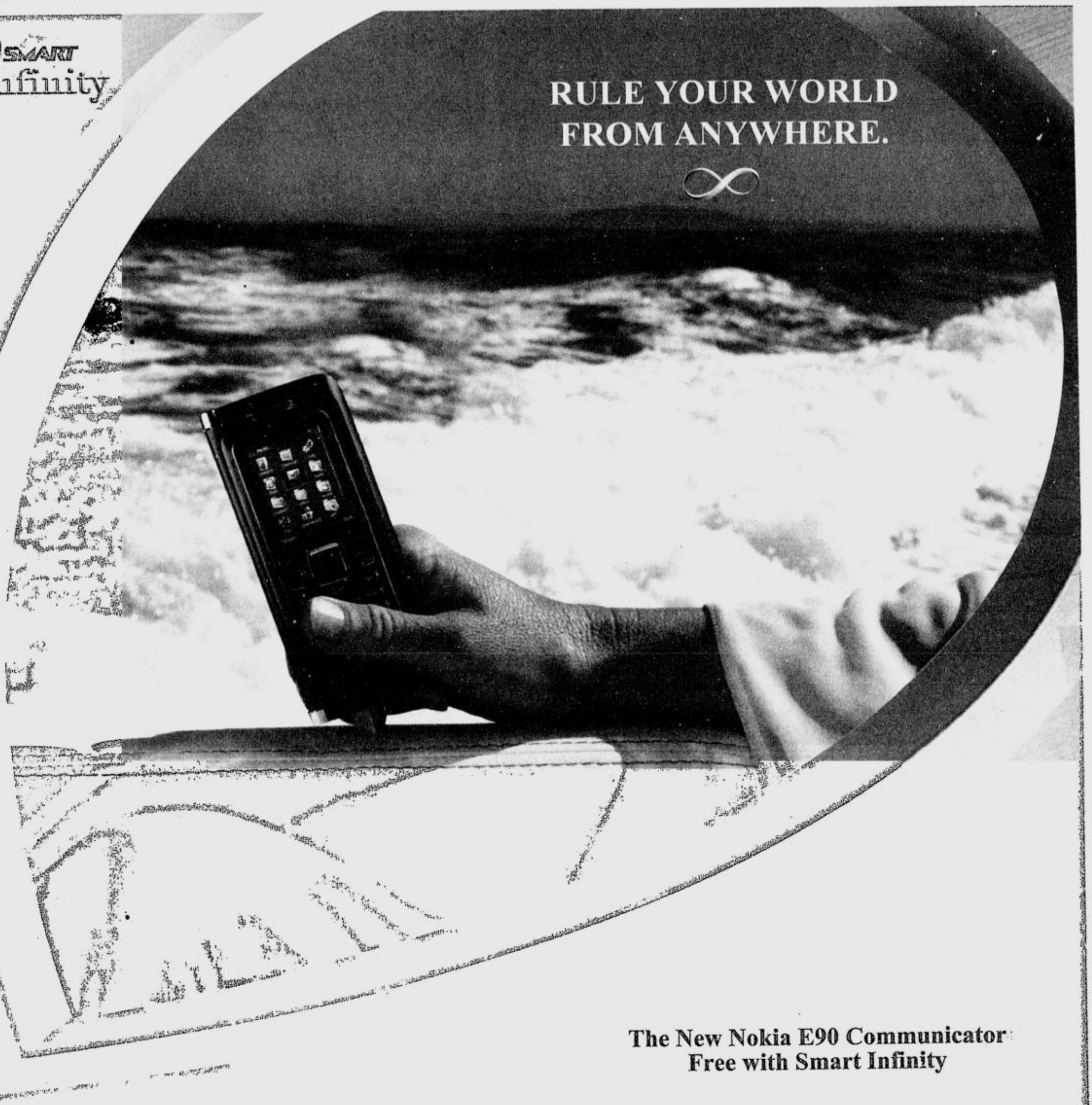

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DID YOU KNOW

THE LOCATION of government financing agencies is just a text message away, at least for Globe subscribers. The "Micro Asenso!" Text Facility launched early this month allows Globe subscribers to get the contact information of more than 3,000 microfinancing institutions (MFI) in the country. To find an MFI in Metro Manila, one should type "micro [space] find [space] name of city" and send it to 2973. To locate an MFI in a province, this message should be sent to the same number: "micro [space] find [space] name of province [comma] name of town." Each message costs P2.50. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

Solution to BF water woes in sight

Homeowners to file petition seeking water concessionaire's entry

By Julie M. Aurelio

TO PUT AN END TO THEIR PROBLEMS, DIFFERent homeowners groups in BF Homes Parañaque City have agreed to ask Maynilad Water to take over the operation and distribution of water in the subdivision. City Mayor Florencio Bernabe Jr. said the residents would file a joint petition asking the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) to allow Maynilad and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to operate and maintain the centralized water system in the area.

"I believe we have given ample time to everybody, individuals or groups, and the time for a final solution has come. The first major step would have to come from you," Bernabe told representatives of homeowners associations during a meeting. Also present during the meeting was Maynilad president Rogelio Singson who advised the representatives to draw up individual resolutions invoking Presidential Decree 1345.

The decree allows the MWSS to take over the water system of a subdivision, particularly in areas where the supply is inadequate or not potable.

In the case of BF Homes Parañaque, Maynilad and the MWSS may be allowed to take over the facilities of the Philippine Waterworks and Construction Corp. (PWCC), which exclusively manages and supplies water to the subdivision.

Bernabe's spokesperson, Nelson Lacambra, said the separate resolutions would then be attached to a joint petition to be signed by the 72 presidents of the homeowners' groups.

The petition would be submitted to the office of the city administrator and to Bernabe, who would endorse the petition to the MWSS and Maynilad before it is filed at the HLURB. To be named respondents in the petition are subdivision developer BF Homes Inc. (BFHI) and PWCC, a subsidiary of BFHI which has its own water pipeline network and pumping facilities.

Maynilad has been negotiating with the two firms to allow it to supply water to the area using the subdivision's existing main pipeline and PWCC's facilities.

The request, however, had been turned down by BFHI and PWCC. De Jesus pointed out that through poor maintenance, the majority of the deep wells from which the PWCC drew its water supply have dried up one after the other.

"This has resulted in reduced water supply on a regular 24-hour basis to more than 10,000 households, prompting them to buy their water from water haulers despite the exorbitant prices," he explained.

De Jesus added that water haulers charge the residents P90 per cubic meter, compared to the P23.53 per cubic meter that Maynilad charges households in Tahanan Village.

Alcano posts bail for abuse raps

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WORLD POOL CHAMPION RONATO "RONie" Alcano yesterday posted bail for the rape and child abuse cases filed against him by his teenage daughter.

Alcano's lawyer, Vic Rodriguez, said his client posted a bail bond of P80,000—20 percent of the P400,000 bail recommended by the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

In a three-page resolution, Assistant City Prosecutor Corazon Romano earlier said she found probable cause to indict Alcano for rape and for violating Section 5 of Republic Act 7610 or the Anti-Child Abuse Law.

"Complainant emphatically narrated that she was sexually molested by her father and when she described all the incidents that transpired, she did it with her right sense as it could be," Romano said.

She added that no woman in her right mind would admit to having been raped unless the charges were true, citing a previous ruling of the Supreme Court. "Settled is the rule that a candid narration by a victim of how she was raped bears the earmarks of credibility," Romano said.

Following the filing of the case against him, Alcano has been ordered by a QC Regional Trial Court to stay at least 1,000 meters away from his daughter.

Rodriguez, meanwhile, said they have filed a motion to dismiss the charges against his client, particularly for violating RA 9262 or the "Act Defining Violence Against Women and their Children."

He explained that although his client was charged with rape and acts of lasciviousness, the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office had dismissed the accusation that Alcano violated RA 9262.

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Politics angle eyed in Quezon City barangay chair's slay

By Jeannette I. Andrade

POLICE ARE EYEING POLITICS in the killing of a Quezon City barangay chair Monday night.

Ronnie Sikat, 40, chair of Barangay Central, was shot seven times in front of his constituents by a still unidentified armed man as he was presiding over the weekly "Ugnayan sa Barangay" forum.

According to SPO1 Demosthenes Rebancos of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (QCPD-CIDU), the incident happened at 7:45 p.m. inside the barangay multipurpose hall at the corner of Quezon Avenue and Agham Road.

Rebancos said that a man approached Sikat and shot him with a .45 caliber pistol while two other men served as lookouts.

The gunman then fled on foot while his companions got on a passenger jeepney bound for the Quezon City Hall.

Residents in the area rushed Sikat to the Lung Center of the Philippines where he was declared dead on arrival.

Members of the Scene of the Crime Operations who went to the site of the shooting recovered six empty shells from a .45 caliber pistol and a slug.

Rebancos said that none of those present at the meeting were able to get a good look at the faces of the suspects because they were all wearing baseball caps.

The witnesses added that the dim lights in the multipurpose hall did not help at all in identifying the suspects.

Go slow on Borgy, lawyer asks media

By Julie M. Aurelio

"PLEASE STOP DRAGGING THE Marcos family into this."

This was the request of the lawyer of Fernando Martin "Borgy" Manotoc yesterday as he asked the press to stop "sensationalizing" the bar brawl on April 9 that allegedly involved the commercial model and Carlo Brown, grandson of another prominent family.

"I am asking the media not to attack my client. This case has become too sensationalized," Abraham Espejo told reporters.

Asked why he thought so, Espejo said Brown's camp had constantly referred to Manotoc's standing as a scion of the Marcos clan as a justification for the model's reportedly violent behavior.

"First of all, the Marcoses are no longer in power. There is no need to drag the family into this," the lawyer pointed out.

But Brown's mother, Mara Pardo de Tavera, said she didn't think the case has been "sensationalized."

"If I mention the history of the Marcoses in relation to his (Manotoc) behavior regarding my son, that's because the family's history needs to be retold all over again so people won't forget," she told the INQUIRER.

She was referring to the 20-year reign of strongman Ferdinand Marcos, Manotoc's grandfather, which ended in 1986.

Brown, who accused Manotoc of beating him up outside the Embassy Bar in Taguig City, submitted his reply to the model's counter-affidavit at the city prosecutors' office yesterday.

Manotoc earlier asked Prosecutor Ricardo Estrabo to dismiss the charges of serious physical injuries filed against him for lack of merit, claiming that the complaint "was a good exercise in fiction writing."

He added that he has four witnesses who testified that he was not among the group of men who mauled Brown outside the bar.

The statements of the witnesses—Edie Evardone, a bar bouncer; Carlos Layug, a bar customer; Arnel Taligdan and Marjorie Palabrica, both security guards—were included in Manotoc's affidavit filed on July 10.

The four claimed that Manotoc even tried to stop the brawl.

But in his nine-page rejoinder affidavit, Brown maintained that Manotoc was one of those who beat him up.

"The report bespeaks the injuries I had sustained by reason of the assault made upon me by Manotoc," Brown added.

Cops launch hunt for missing gas station manager

By Kristine L. Alave

A GAS STATION MANAGER SUSPECTED OF stealing nearly half a million pesos from the establishment's vault just after midnight on Monday is now the object of a manhunt.

The suspect was identified as Jimboy Gintapan, 26, a resident of Rosario Street in Pateros, and manager of the Flying V Gas Station in Barangay Buting, Pasig City.

In his report to the police, Jones Ballesteros, the gas station owner, accused Gintapan of taking with him P452,700, representing the station's earnings on July 20, 21 and 22.

Ballesteros, 41, a resident of Cainta, Rizal province, said that when he checked the gas station's vault at about 1:30 a.m. Monday, he found it empty.

About an hour before Ballesteros discovered the loss, employees of the gas station said they saw Gintapan leaving the establishment carrying a box.

Ballesteros' wife, Rasil, told the INQUIRER that only Gintapan had access to the vault. As station manager, Gintapan is in charge of tallying the daily sales and reporting the station's earnings to the owners.

Gintapan, who normally shows up for work at 8 a.m. every Monday to report the revenues for the previous week, has not returned to work since the incident. As he could not be reached by phone, the owners decided to call the police instead.

METROBRIEFS

Man texts suicide note to girl

A 26-YEAR-OLD man sent his girlfriend a suicide note through text before killing himself in Novaliches, Quezon City. A white towel was wound around the neck of Roel Lalaguna who was found hanging from a wooden beam in his rented room at around 9 p.m. Monday. His body was discovered by Maria Teresa Tumampoc, 19, his girlfriend, who went to the victim's house after receiving his text message on Sunday night. The message read in Filipino: "Goodbye. I love you very much. Remember that and I hope you will find someone who will love you as much as I did." Police said that based on their investigation, Lalaguna had been distraught after receiving news about his wife who lived in the province.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Bank loses P30,000 to thieves

FOUR robbers broke into a bank in Las Piñas City yesterday and made off with P30,000 without firing a single shot. The incident happened at the First Macro Bank, located on Real St. in Barangay Pulanglupa 1. Initial investigation revealed that four unidentified men, armed with .45 cal. and 9 mm pistols, entered the bank at 11:10 a.m. and announced the heist. One of the robbers disarmed Manuel Elizar, 57, a security guard of the bank. They then took P30,000 in cash, three cell phones and the personal belongings of some of the bank's customers and employees. The suspects escaped on board two motorcycles followed by a silver Mitsubishi Lancer.

Julie M. Aurelio

3 men injured in Manila fire

ANOTHER fire broke out in Sta. Cruz, Manila yesterday, a day after two school buildings burned down on Alvarez Street. Three men were injured in the fire on Ma. Clara Street which razed at least 10 houses at around 4:14 a.m. yesterday. Arson investigator SFO2 Wilson Tana said the fire was put out an hour later. Those injured were identified as Ramil Reyes, 41, who sustained second-degree burns in the arm; Jonjon Fajardo, 45, who suffered a cut on his left arm; and Michael San Jose, whose left toe was injured. Tana said a brownout hit the area the night before. An unattended candle or lamp could have started the fire which began in the two-story house owned by Willie Angeles. Damage to property was estimated at P900,000. Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, meanwhile, yesterday ordered an investigation of reports that firemen from a nearby station did not respond immediately when a fire hit two school buildings last Sunday. Lim directed Manila Police District acting director, Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa, to look into complaints that firefighters from the Quiricada police station, just a stone's throw away from the fire on Alvarez Street, were slow to respond. The INQUIRER called up city fire marshal Pablito Cordeta for comment but was told that he was in a meeting.

Allison W. Lopez

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LATEST CATASTROPHE

58 dead in Indon landslides

PALU, INDONESIA—INDONESIAN search and rescue workers struggled in bad weather on Tuesday to reach survivors in flooded and landslide-hit Central Sulawesi, as the death toll from the disaster rose to 58.

The floods have affected some 36,000 people and are the latest in a string of natural catastrophes to hit Indonesia, where activists have long warned that logging and a failure to reforest denuded land will lead to repeat tragedies.

The head of the Central Sulawesi disaster control task force, Frits Abbas, said that 58 people had been killed, but that more victims were still buried under debris.

Days of heavy rains sparked floods that inundated Central Sulawesi's Morowali district on Sunday, demolishing hundreds of homes and severing transport links.

On Tuesday, two-meter high waters also swept through Banggai district to the east, said Rustam Pakaya, from the health ministry's crisis center in the Indonesian capital Jakarta.

The floods have affected some 20,000 people in 16 villages there, he said, while the homes of some 16,000 others in Morowali were inundated.

Entire villages remain cut off in the area, located about 1,600 kilometers northeast of Jakarta, with torrents of mud and water wiping out access bridges.

People are taking refuge in mosques and the homes of relatives, Pakaya said.

A provincial health office team was heading to the affected area by raft but they could not be immediately reached.

The health ministry tallied seven confirmed deaths with 45 people missing, while the number of injured was unknown and at least 82 homes were completely destroyed, Pakaya told AFP.

A Hercules transport plane laden with six tonnes of medical supplies and food left Jakarta at dawn Tuesday, while three doctors traveling to the affected area from a regional hospital were stranded en route, he added.

Search and rescue efforts were hampered by flooded and blocked roads into affected areas, while poor weather made flights and sea travel dangerous, the disaster control task force's Abbas said.

"We are not even sure whether teams of soldiers and police dispatched to the area have arrived," he said.

The teams left from various towns in the region on Monday.

In Uweruru village, a landslide hit on Sunday and a second followed after dusk Monday, burying several buildings, including a small mosque being used as a temporary shelter for survivors, district police chief Sri Suharsono said.

"But we have as yet no report on the number of victims buried in this landslide," Suharsono said.

Flooding in Central Sulawesi, where illegal logging is reported to be rampant, submerged 16 villages in May and also forced thousands to flee to higher ground. The south of Sulawesi was hit by floods in June last year, leaving 250 dead and 100 missing.

Deforestation reduces the capacity of the ecosystem to regulate water and also leads to soil erosion and landslides. *AFP*

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China claims world's first cloned rabbit

BEIJING—CHINA HAS PRODUCED THE world's first cloned rabbit using a biological process that takes cells from a fetus, state media said on Tuesday.

The female rabbit, which weighed 60 grams at birth in February, was now growing normally at an animal center in Shanghai, the China Daily said.

Scientists have cloned mice, cattle and other animals since the first cloned sheep, Dolly, was born in 1996. Malaysia is even trying to clone some of its threatened leatherback turtles to save them from extinction.

But it was only in 2002 that French scientists produced the world's first cloned rabbit using cells from an adult female rabbit, the paper said.

The Chinese rabbit was the world's first to be cloned using "fibroblast" cells from a fetal rabbit, the China Daily said.

"Chinese cloning research has reached a global advanced level," the newspaper quoted Wang Hongguang, director of the China Center for Biotechnology Development, under the Ministry of Science and Technology, as saying.

"We can reproduce almost all the cloning results in top-class laboratories around the world. However, we are lacking in original creations such as the newly cloned rabbit."

It was not clear if the findings had been published in a scientific journal or independently verified. *Reuters*

US targets Nokor nuclear deal by 2008

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES HAS set 2008 as the target for full implementation of an accord to end North Korea's nuclear weapons drive, including a final peace deal for the Korean peninsula, top United States nuclear envoy Christopher Hill said on Monday.

"It would be in 2008 we would really want to wrap this up," he told reporters in Washington on his return from six-party talks in Beijing.

"The sooner the better, I mean, from my humble perspective. But in 2008 we would hope to wrap this up. I hope it wouldn't take 12 months," Hill said.

With the next US presidential elections in November 2008, the administration of President George W. Bush is eager to complete the implementation of the complex nuclear deal before he vacates the White House.

Under the deal, North Korea has to disable its nuclear arsenal in return for aid and diplomatic and security guarantees, including diplomatic relations with Washington and a permanent accord to formally end the 1950-53 Korean War.

North Korea has already shut down its main Yongbyon nuclear reactor as promised under a Feb. 13 accord reached by the six parties—the US, China, Russia, the two Koreans and Japan.

In September, the six parties hope to adopt a comprehensive program with possibly a 2007 deadline for North Korea to declare and disable its entire nuclear arsenal under phase two of the nuclear accord. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Road mishap in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR—Eleven people died and four others were seriously injured on Tuesday when their van crashed into the back of a truck on a Malaysian highway, police said. The two Malaysians and nine citizens of Burma (Myanmar) who died were traveling on Malaysia's East Coast Highway toward Kuala Lumpur when the pre-dawn accident occurred, said Ahmad Fadzilah Mohamed, acting police chief of Temerloh district. Four other Burmese who were in the van have been hospitalized, Ahmad said, adding that the weather was foggy and the van driver was believed to have been sleepy. The driver of the truck was not injured. *AP*

Suicide blast kills 26 in Iraq

HILLA, IRAQ—A suicide car bomb exploded across the street from a children's hospital in the Iraqi city of Hilla on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people and wounding 69, police and medical officials said. "Most of the wounded were women and children, and the blast destroyed 15 vehicles and about 20 nearby shops," said Lt. Eid al-Shammari of the local police. Dr. Mohammed Dhia, head surgeon at the Hilla hospital confirmed the casualties, adding that 25 of those wounded had serious injuries, including severe burns. *AFP*

Korean hostages get reprieve

KABUL—The Taliban on Monday gave 23 Korean hostages another 24 hours to live to allow the South Korean government to open direct talks with the kidnappers, a Taliban spokesperson said on Monday. Spokesperson Qari Mohammad Yousuf said negotiations with the Afghan government were going nowhere and South Korea had until sundown on Tuesday to agree to withdraw its 200 troops from Afghanistan. Unless it did so, the Taliban would start killing the captives. It was the second time the Taliban had extended their deadline by 24 hours. Yousuf said a German hostage the Taliban had said they had killed was still alive along with four Afghans and they were still held hostage. *Reuters*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Libya frees Bulgarian nurses

SOFIA—SIX FOREIGN MEDICS CONVICTED OF infecting Libyan children with HIV arrived in Sofia on Tuesday after being freed by Libya under a deal with the European Union.

Their release after eight years in captivity ends what Libya's critics called a human rights scandal and lifts a barrier to attempts by the long-isolated north African state to complete a process of normalizing ties with the outside world.

"I don't know what to say, I've been living for this moment," 54-year-old nurse Snezhana Dimitrova said as the nurses and their families cried and hugged each other at the airport.

Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov pardoned the six medics soon after their arrival on a French jet. The medics said they were innocent and had been tortured to confess.

A Libyan close to the negotiations said the five Bulgarians and a Palestinian who recently took Bulgarian citizenship were freed under an agreement with the EU on medical aid and political ties.

"There was agreement on equipping the hospital in Benghazi and treatment for the children ... All the political matters have been met," the Libyan contacted by telephone from Algiers said.

The medics were accompanied by EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner and France's First Lady Cecilia Sarkozy, who had been in Tripoli to help their release.

"This decision will open the way for a new and enhanced relationship between the EU and Libya and reinforce our ties with the Mediterranean region and the whole of Africa," Ferrero-Waldner said in a statement on arrival in Sofia.

The Libyan close to the negotiations said European countries had agreed to provide medical assistance for the children and to help upgrade a hospital in Benghazi, Libya's second city and the town where the infections first appeared in the 1990s.

The EU had also agreed to improve its ties with Libya and build what the Libyan called a partnership that would include free trade. Bulgaria is a new EU member. *Reuters*

SIX FOREIGN medics convicted of infecting Libyan children with HIV arrive in Sofia on July 24, after being freed by Libya under a deal with the European Union. Their release after eight years in captivity ends what Libya's critics called a human rights scandal and lifts a barrier to attempts by the long-isolated north African state to complete a process of normalizing ties with the outside world. REUTERS

Democratic presidential bets debate via YouTube

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA—Democratic White House hopefuls made history on Monday, parrying Internet video questions from voters soured on modern politics, in a sign of the web's booming role in elections.

"*Wassup*? asked the first questioner Zach Kempf from Provo, Utah, in a greeting heralding an unconventional two-hour 2008 campaign debate hosted by video-sharing website YouTube and broadcast by CNN from South Carolina.

Front-runner Hillary Clinton, Sen. Barack Obama, former senator John Edwards and five other long-shot candidates, faced a selection from the 3,000 YouTube videos submitted, played to them on a large screen.

The debate was seen as a bid to harness the power of the web, as citizens armed with only webcams and computers demanded a say in politics dominated by multi-million dollar warchests, wealthy consultants and corporate media.

But if the medium was unconventional, candidates rolled out answers straight from tried-and-tested political playbooks, duelling on Iraq, Darfur, gay marriage, healthcare, tax policy and education.

In one poignant video, the mother of a young soldier about to deploy to Iraq asked "how many more soldiers must die while these political games continue in our government?"

Clinton thanked the woman for her family's service and later said "we need to set a timeline to begin bringing our troops home now." *AFP*

Europe fights extremes—floods and heat wave

LONDON—EUROPE BATTLED weather extremes late Monday as heavy rain sparked the worst flooding in England in 60 years, while the south and east of the continent was roasting in a heat wave that claimed several lives.

Large swathes of central and western England were submerged as rivers swelled and burst their banks during four days of heavy and persistent rain, leaving thousands without clean water or electricity and facing the prospect of more rain.

Britain's COBRA government emergency planning committee met Monday evening amid concerns that an electricity sub-station in Gloucester would be flooded, leaving half a million homes without electricity.

Fortunately for residents of the area, the Environment Agency said that the River Severn had reached a peak there, just 5 centimeters below the main wall protecting the city center and the power station.

The Royal Air Force evacuated around 150 people in its biggest ever peacetime rescue, while over 100 Royal Navy sailors were sent to bolster flood defenses around the electricity sub-station which serves 500,000 homes.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown earlier linked the floods to climate change and pledged 200 million pounds ($411 million) extra funding, plus a review to address future issues.

His comments came as a study released in the British science journal Nature yielded the first confirmation that global warming is already affecting world rainfall patterns.

Changes in climate were bringing more precipitation to northern Europe, Canada and northern Russia but less to swathes of sub-Saharan Africa, southern India and Southeast Asia, according to scientists with Environment Canada. *AFP*

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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■ **Foes,** woes chase Rasmussen /A30

RP 5 flies to Japan for Fiba tilt

Chot to finalize roster by Friday

By Francis Ochoa

AFTER THE CRAMMING, THE EXHORTATIONS and the defensive sound bites about how every setback has been a necessary pain for a team that needs to shape up, it is now time for the real thing.

No more learning. No more excuses.

The San Miguel-Pilipinas squad flies to Tokushima, Japan, today ready to make the first step in its bid to nail an Olympic berth by way of the Fiba Asia basketball championship: Trim down the 15-man pool into a final 12-man roster.

After a morning practice, the Nationals proceed to the Centennial Terminal for a 2:30 p.m. flight to Japan, where they will face the best basketball nations in the continent for a shot at participating in the 2008 Beijing Games.

NORWOOD

The task will start with a job that is easier said then done.

National coach Chot Reyes will have to submit the RP team's final roster for the tournament on July 27, during the managers' meeting that will serve as a prelude to the tournament.

The final 12-man roster will come from a merry mix of talent.

Asi Taulava, Mark Caguioa, Danny Seigle, Jimmy Alapag, Dondon Hontiveros, Kelly Williams, Renren Ritualo, Jayjay Helterbrand, Kerby Raymundo, Erik Menk, Mick Pennisi, Ranidel De Ocampo, Tony dela Cruz and James Yap form the pool of well-paid PBA superstars ready to subjugate their egos to the national cause.

And then there is George Mason U standout Gabe Norwood, who received his Philippine passport Tuesday evening, making him available for national duty.

After the cut comes the mission.

"We've done everything humanely possible to prepare for Japan," said Reyes. "It now boils down to execution, desire and pride. And prayers from the Filipino nation."

The Nationals hope to rule the tournament, or finish second to Olympic host China, to nail down a basketball berth in the Summer Games.

The first three hurdles have been set. The Nationals take on Iran on July 28, China on July 29, and Jordan on July 30 in the preliminary round.

"For nearly 147 days, the PBA-backed SMC-Pilipinas labored and sacrificed for one solitary chance of a lifetime in search of our Olympic dream," PBA commissioner Noli Eala said.

PBA chair Ricky Vargas urged the Nationals to pour their hearts out in the fulfillment of their commitment.

"It is not committing to do your best that is hard; you have already done that," Vargas said. "It is living up to that commitment that is difficult. So live it up to the fullest by achieving the task ahead of you."

SMC-Pilipinas team manager Robert Non said the tournament is as much about redemption and respect as anything else.

"This is it, the culmination of our sacrifices and hard work for the past two years," Non said. "Now it is time for us to pray and support the SMC-Pilipinas team as our national players carry our dreams of redemption in international basketball.

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Fierce fight tipped as Red Lions take on Knights

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	5	0
Letran	4	1
S Sebastian	3	3
Jose Rizal	2	3
Perpetual	2	4
Mapua	2	4
St. Benilde	1	4

GAMES TODAY (*The Arena, San Juan*)
2 p.m.—St. Benilde vs Jose Rizal (Srs)
4 p.m.—San Beda vs Letran (Srs)

CAN THE KNIGHTS' BATTLE-SCARRED ARMOR stand the Red Lions?

The most anticipated game of the NCAA season kicks off today when arch rivals Letran and San Beda face off to put a fitting end to the first elimination round at The Arena in San Juan.

The unbeaten Lions take on the Knights with almost everybody betting on the defending champions to close the first half of their elimination assignments on a sweep.

Everybody, including Letran coach Louie Alas.

"This is a very strong team even if it plays all-Filipino—what more with an import in tow," said Alas. "We are just going into the game with the mind-set that we have nothing to lose."

Letran, nevertheless, held a three-hour practice yesterday, sharpening the defense they will throw against San Beda's Yousif Aljamal and Pong Escobal.

If there's a missing name in the priority list, it's because Alas has practically given up on trying to contain Nigerian Sam Ekwe.

"He is a given, we can't stop him," Alas said.

But San Beda coach Frankie Lim does not buy the whole David-vs-Goliath showdown.

"I'm pretty sure Letran will move heaven and earth to beat us," said Lim. "We are the only unbeaten team, so all the teams we are playing will gang up on us. Nothing will come easy."

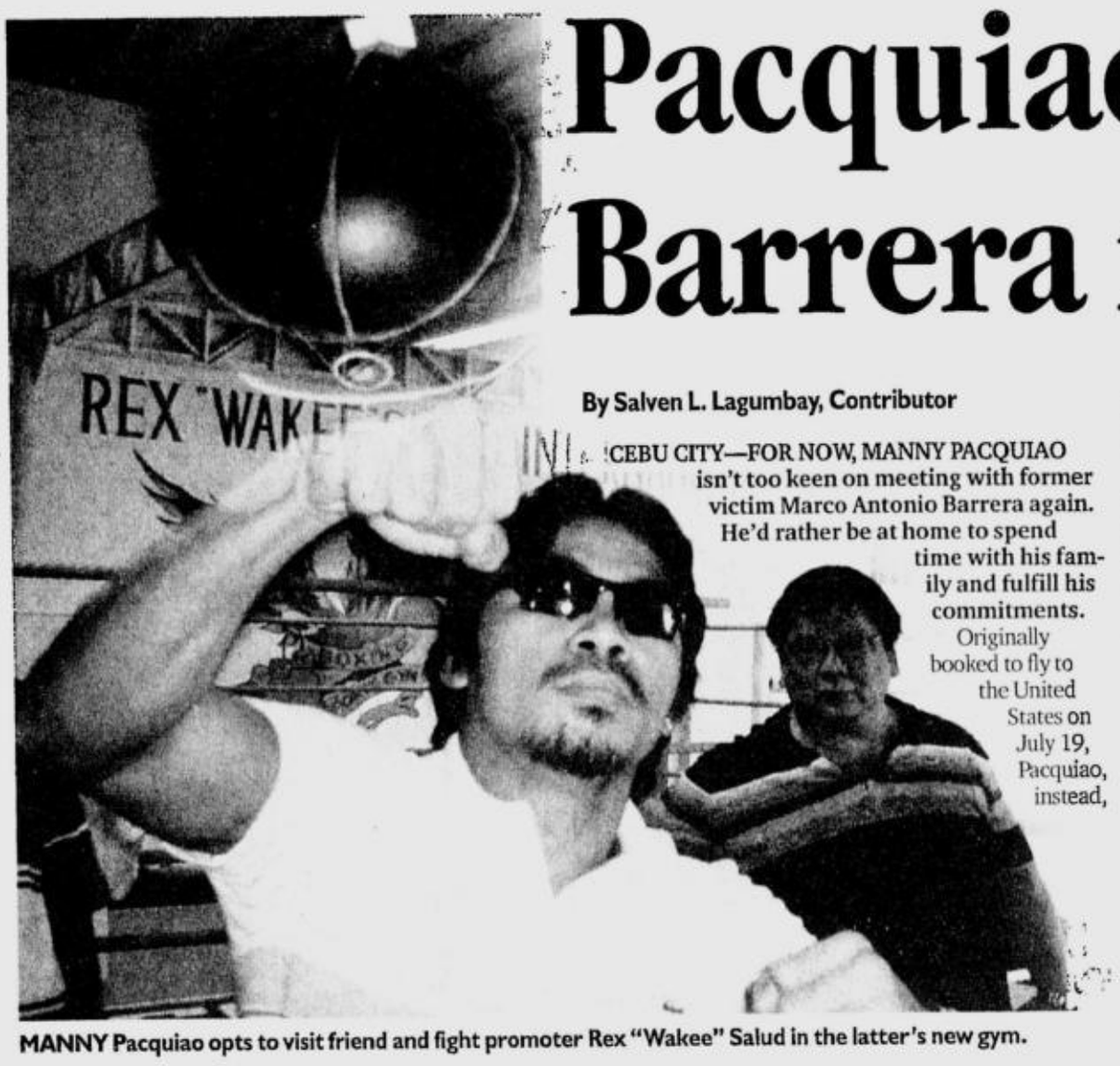
The Lions are hoping to extend their five-game swirl for a first-round sweep, something that was denied them last season by Philippine Christian University.

Letran will enter the court nursing the sting of its 79-75 loss to Jose Rizal last Friday, which JRU coach Ariel Vanguardia said could be enough motivation for the Knights to beat the Lions.

If the Knights (4-1), indeed, beat the Lions, they will take the top spot going into the second round by virtue of the winner-over-the-other rule.

The Heavy Bombers will try to close the eliminations by planting a firm foot in the upper half of the standings when they go up against the St. Benilde Blazers at 2 p.m. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Pacquiao snubs Barrera meeting



MANNY Pacquiao opts to visit friend and fight promoter Rex "Wakee" Salud in the latter's new gym.

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

CEBU CITY—FOR NOW, MANNY PACQUIAO isn't too keen on meeting with former victim Marco Antonio Barrera again. He'd rather be at home to spend time with his family and fulfill his commitments.

Originally booked to fly to the United States on July 19, Pacquiao, instead, arrived in this city yesterday to honor a commitment to visit good friend and fight promoter Rex "Wakee" Salud, who is building a multimillion peso boxing gym.

Pacquiao said he will leave for Los Angeles on July 30 to begin his training at the Wild Card Gym and take part in the promotional blitz for the megabuck rematch set Oct. 6 in Las Vegas. In their first fight in 2003, Pacquiao beat the Mexican ring icon via an 11th-round technical knockout.

Longtime trainer Buboy Fernandez sees no problem with Pacquiao's decision to defer his US trip.

"Manny will have ample time to train for the Barrera fight," assured Fernandez. "He knows too well that Barrera wants to retire with a big win over him. However, we know how to train for Barrera, and we are very optimistic of repeating (the victory)."

Sans Pacquiao, organizers of the Pacquiao-Barrera II press conference, scheduled in Beverly Hills, today announced that it would be moved to a new date.

"A conflict in Manny's schedule has prevented him from travelling to the US," Bob Arum of Top Rank told Fightnews.com. "We will be rescheduling soon."

"It would be nice to train here," Pacquiao said in describing Salud's state-of-the art gym. "I like it very much."

Pacquiao is set to return to Cebu after the Barrera fight to inaugurate the new gym, according to Salud.

UAAP: Allera puts Tigers back in the hunt

GAMES THURSDAY (Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m.—NU vs UST (Srs)
4 p.m.—La Salle vs Ateneo (Srs)

WHEN UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS scored its first victory of the season, coach Pido Jarencio admitted relief from the growing pressure.

"At least we're improving every game," he said.

A dismal 0-2 start in the UAAP men's basketball competition almost had the defending champions pushing the panic button, looking for someone to spark an offense sorely feeling the crunch of Jojo Duncil's decision to turn pro.

Good thing Francis Allera came to the rescue, hammering out a pair of notable performances to recharge the Tigers' title-retention bid.

Allera, who actually plays off the bench, averaged 20.5 points, 8.5 rebounds and one block in the Tigers' victories against the Adamson Falcons and the University of the Philippines Maroons.

"[When it comes to] Allera, *wala na akong masabi* (I can't say anything more)," said Jarencio of the 6-foot-4 forward, who earned the UAAP Press Corps' Anta Player of the Week citation.

Allera took the weight off the Tigers' shoulders when he drilled in 18 of a career-high 26 points from beyond the arc as the Tigers' notched their first victory with a 96-84 rout of the Falcons last Thursday.

Still in his element two days later, Allera finished a rebound shy of a double-double with 15 points and nine boards in the Tigers' 76-68 triumph over the Maroons.

University of the East's Jorel Cañizares and Ateneo's Chris Tiu also came through in crucial wins to earn nominations for the weekly plum given by sportswriters covering the collegiate scene. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Japan, Taiwan batters forge Pony title clash

ANGELES CITY—JAPANESE PITchers limited RP-Central Luzon batters to four hits in an abbreviated 11-1 win yesterday and sealed a title showdown with similarly unbeaten Chinese Taipei in the Pony Baseball 33rd Asia-Pacific Zone Bronco Division Championships at the Maria Wright Field here.

Yuki Noguchi, the third pitcher in the Japanese rotation after Ryota Konno and Keito Maeda, yielded the RP kids' only run in the bottom of the fifth inning through Carlo Caparas as Japan scored its third straight victory.

The championship clash is set at 1 p.m. today. Japan and Chinese Taipei were still playing at presstime for the top spot at the close of the elimination round.

The champion squad gets the right to represent Asia-Pacific in the Pony World Series slated next month in California.

The Japanese victory over RP-Central Luzon, represented by Nueva Ecija champion Palayan City, dampened RP-Metro Manila's hopes of forging a three-way tie for the second finals berth.

RP-Metro Manila, made up of 11- to 12-year-old batters from ILLAM and Muntinlupa City, smashed Hong Kong, 17-6, yesterday for their second win following setbacks to the Japanese on Sunday and Taiwanese on Monday.

RP-NCR is assured of the No. 3 finish, though, and will battle the winner between RP-Central Luzon and Hong Kong in a playoff for third.

The Filipinos sprayed Hong Kong with a total of 14 hits.

Despite the win, RP-NCR coach Joey Carillo was far from satisfied.

"It was lousy," said Carillo. "The Japanese told us we were better individually, and that our only problem is we lack discipline."

MALAYSIA TRIATHLON

Serrano rules; Kim 3rd

JOASH SERRANO, THE COUNtry's TOP junior triathlete, clinched his first international title when he dominated the Port Dickson International Triathlon's sprint race, even as Kim Mangrobang bagged a bronze in the distaff side in Malaysia on Sunday.

MANGROBANG

Serrano clocked a remarkable 49 minutes and 11 seconds in the 750-meter swim, 20-kilometer bike and 5-km run event and finished one minute and one second ahead of runner-up Alan Chan of Hong Kong.

Another one minute and four seconds adrift in third place in the elite junior category was Chan's teammate Arthur Chung.

Mangrobang checked in with a time of 53:49. Winner Vincci Hui and silver medalist Joyce Chung, both of Hong Kong, timed 52:23 and 52:50, respectively.

Andrew Gatmaitan claimed sixth spot with a time of 53:16 while his sister Anna (1:09:26) wound up fourth.

"The fine performances of Joash and Kim have demonstrated the well-roundedness of our programs," said Tom Carrasco, president of Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP).

TRAP hosted the 2007 International Triathlon Union-BG Asian Junior Training Camp at Subic Bay Freeport on July 6-15. In the graduation race, both Serrano and Mangrobang emerged as bronze medalists with the Hong Kong triathletes finishing 1-2 in both the boys' and girls' divisions.

From July 9 to 15, the ITU-BG Asian Coaching Course was also held in Subic Bay Freeport, which was also the venue of the ITU-BG International Technical Officials Certification Course for Asians from May 4 to 6.

The Subic International Triathlon, held during the event, inaugurated the kiddies triathlon (super kids) as the practicum vehicle.

Is the RP team safe from a relapse?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

INJURIES WERE "HEALING FAST" IN the RP national basketball team and there's every reason to believe the squad would be shipshape when it travels today for its monumental mission in Japan.

There's the awesome goal to snatch the last ticket to the Beijing Olympics basketball tournament next year, but this seems reachable, based on all the glossy play-ups.

OK, Reyes may have wanted one bigger, braver guy at the slot, and another reliable on-and-on gunner from the perimeter, who could also do a no-nonsense stopping job.

But it's all systems go, as the national mentor declares the team free from affliction.

* * *

Reyes also appears cock-sure there would be no repeat of the nosedive suffered by the RP squad against Kazakhstan in the last William Jones Cup series in Taipei.

You see, in that traumatic crash against the Kazakhs, the Nationals played limbless and lost like victims of severe food poisoning.

After some energetic point-making in the first half, the Nationals inexplicably lost heart and dropped their guard the rest of the night.

The Nationals, as a whole, would ooze with pep and courage in going for the basket, but would next turn pale and gutless in their turn to defend.

The result was a disastrous fold-up that had the coach cursing, before canceling team dinner and ordering an early lights-out.

* * *

Well, it was obvious that affliction—which saw the RP team crashing in its closing game in the Jones Cup—had been remedied.

In fact, coach Chot no longer talked about it, and there's reason to believe the RP squad would be totally safe from a relapse during the Olympic qualifier, which starts in Japan on Saturday.

For one, the team went on to sweep the four-team Manila Invitational, where the Nationals made a display of enviable artillery, mainly in the title match against Lebanon.

This build-up was capped by colorful televised pledges from national players on their devotion to flag and country.

For one, Asi Taulava, who had greater use for his dimples than his defensive footwork against Kazakhstan, suddenly appeared ready to die fighting.

* * *

Sorry about this, but in outscoring all its opponents, the RP team missed taking the necessary defensive test during the Manila Invitational.

Well, as the tough schedule bears it out, RP no longer has to wait and play Kazakhstan again to take that decisive test.

The RP team has to mount tireless, unforgiving, full-hearted defense ahead of a possible clash with Kazakhstan.

Yes, despite a core made up of Fil-Ams, the RP squad showed it could not regularly mount a sure-fire offensive.

So it's now a must that it plays its guts out in defense starting in the first game against Iran.

In fact, coach Chot need not be told that, unlike with point-making, there's no off day in defense—if your players have the purity of (Pinoy) heart to do the terrible job.

This is the only way Reyes could make sure the RP team doesn't suffer a relapse.

SPORTSWATCH

Rodriguez within range of US Girls' match plays

CYNA RODRIGUEZ STRUGGLED WITH HER putter and settled for an even-par 72, good for a share of 25th place at the start of the 36-hole qualifying for the US Girls Junior Golf Championship at the Tacoma Golf and Country in Lakewood, Washington, on Monday.

Rodriguez, 15, flubbing several birdie chances inside four feet, had nines of 35-37.

Still, that was enough to put her in the middle of the pack, well within the 64-player range for the match play phase.

But Dottie Ardina and Chihiro Ikeda, the two other members of the ICTSI-backed RP teams, did not fare better. They matched 76s for a share of 76th.

Kimberly Kim, last year's winner of the US Women's Amateur, sizzled with a record-tying, 10-under 62 to pace the 156-player field.

Meanwhile, national champion Jay Bayron gets the rare chance to play against the world's top 100 amateurs when he competes in the 49th Annual Porter Cup starting Wednesday in Buffalo, New York.

LSGH five tops Xavier

LA SALLE GREEN HILLS ENCOUNTERED tough opposition from Xavier School but pulled through anyway, 45-38, as it launched its SBP title-retention bid Sunday in the 22nd season of the SBP/Passerelle basketball tournaments at the Xavier Sports Complex.

Don Bosco Technical Institute, De La Salle Zobel and St. Mary's College also triumphed in three other thrilling SBP contests.

DBTI trimmed Don Bosco Technical College, 35-31; DLSZ downed Notre Dame of Greater Manila, 43-38; and St. Mary's outsteadied San Sebastian College, 34-25.

La Salle Green Hills made it a double celebration by downing San Beda, 69-60, in the Passerelle division.

San Beda won the national crown last year, but its team has been split into two in this year's event. The other San Beda squad also fell to Xavier School, 39-64.

It was a black day for the Bedans as its SBC Alabang team dropped to a 59-60 decision to Ateneo in Passerelle.

In other Passerelle games, Marist School d. Notre Dame of Greater Manila, 59-56; Antipolo Lady of Lourdes d. FEU-FERN, 58-42; DBTI d. Kid's World CA, 48-33; DBTC d. San Benildo Integrated School, 47-46.

Bering net siblings through

ILIGAN CITY—BERNARDINE BERING whipped Ofel Isidore Lascuna, 6-3, 6-0, and younger brother Bernan whitewashed Jorou Librodo, 6-0, 6-0, to barge into the finals of their respective age groups in the 2007 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the NPC-Iligan Tennis Club on Sunday.

Bernardine will face Kent Tac-an, who blanked Fernan Cambongga, 6-0, 6-0, for the boys' 16-under trophy, then shoots for a double in the 18-under class following a 6-1, 6-0 semifinal win over the same Lascuna.

Bernan takes on Eleazar Busalpa, who routed Mark Bienes, 6-0, 6-1, for the boys' 14-under crown.

Other semifinal results: Unisex 10-under—Spencer Sagrado d. Janelle Llavore, 6-0, 6-1; Kenneth Dumapit d. Bernlu Bering, 6-1, 6-1; Boys' 12-under—Mark Bienes d. J. Librodo, 6-3, 6-3; Charles Cailing d. Dwyne Tarculas 6-3, 6-2; Girls 12-under—Lenelyn Milo d. Kim Iglupas, 6-2, 6-2; Gerr Marie Ladera d. J. Llavore, 6-0, 6-1; Girls' 14-under—Nina Lladera d. Milo, 6-0, 6-1, Ayn Magracia d. Kim Waga, 6-0, 6-1; Girls' 16-under—Robielou Santos d. Ladera, 6-1, 6-3.

'Showdown' stagfest moved

THE 2007 EDITION OF THE ANNUAL Showdown 6-Stag Derby, now on its 22nd year, will be held at the San Juan Coliseum on Sept. 3, 5 and 7.

The Showdown stagfest lures a minimum of 100 entries each year, according to host Danny Ty who will be backed up by Manny Berbano, publisher of Pit Games magazine.

Entry fee is P11,000 and the guaranteed prize P1.5 million.

Stags, with weight limits of 1.7 kg to 2.4 kg, must be eight to 10 months old only.

Screening of stags starts on Aug. 3. For inquiries, call 0917-8277484 or 725-5369.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Sa Wakas (3), Lovely Tara (5), Our Hope (2), Kalshnikov (6)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Eye Candy (3), Manila's Style (5), Hasit Coming (4), Joint Account (6)

Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Fair Urduja (7), Gold Collar (2), Blue Iris (5), Formidable Jaede/Silver Cho Cho (1)

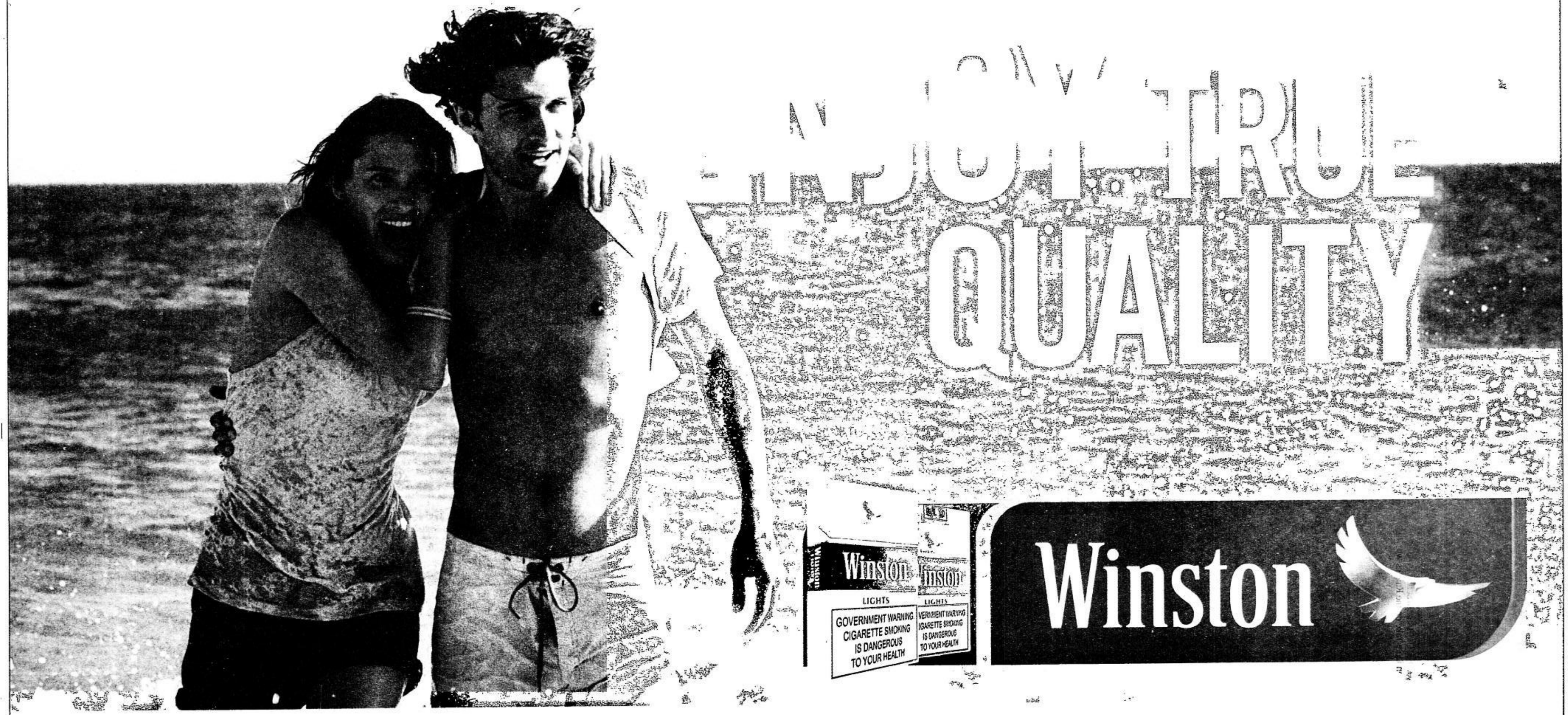
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Modern Classic (6), Mano Po (5), Powerhouse (3), Reign Of Roses (1)

Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Five O'Clock (4), Sol Invictus (9), Reporter (1), Dato's Pride (6), Gondor (10)

Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Alyssa's Choice (6), Dow Jones (3), Bull Rock (1), Friendly Ventures/Classy Pages (7)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Pentagon (5), Raise A Dancer (7), Money Man (2), Gun Powder (11), Friendly Fire (13)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Bumble Bee (4), Sunline (10), Pound For Pound (6), Real Black (9), Lady Inday (3), Getting Personal (2)



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SPORTS

Foes, woes chase Rasmussen

RASMUSSEN: Pressured AFP

LOUDENVIELLE-LE LOURON, FRANCE—Feeling increasing pressure on the course and off it, Michael Rasmussen has refused to crack and his hold on the Tour de France lead is looking increasingly solid with five days of racing left.

The wiry Dane reeled in repeated breakaway attempts by Alberto Contador, his last major challenger for the yellow jersey, in Monday's punishing ride along five climbs in the Pyrenees.

One-time race favorite Alexandre Vinokourov won the 15th stage along the Spanish border, his second stage victory this year, continuing a pattern of toggling between a bad showing one day with an exceptional performance the next.

Rasmussen has been a paragon of consistency.

He has needed to be.

The Danish cycling union said last week it had kicked him off the national team because he had missed doping tests before the Tour. A day later, a former amateur mountain bike racer claimed Rasmussen tricked him into carrying a human blood substitute to Italy five years ago.

On Monday, the head of the International Cycling Union joined in with his doubts about Rasmussen.

"With all this speculation around him it would be better if somebody else were to win," UCI chief Pat McQuaid told The Associated Press. "The last thing this sport needs is more speculation about doping."

Patrice Clerc, the head of Tour organizer Amaury Sports, was quoted on as saying that he "regrets" the Dane's presence.

"I guess it's normal, they're shooting at No. 1," Rasmussen said, alluding to the pressure that seven-time Tour winner Lance Armstrong faced over doping claims. "I'm sure he was under tremendous pressure and under fire for seven years in a row, and still he managed to win the race seven times." *AP*

IRAQ MOTIVATION

Asian Cup final slot: A gift in time of troubles

KUALA LUMPUR—IRAQ HAS THE BURDEN of national expectations riding on its shoulder as it pursues its first-ever Asian Cup final appearance against South Korea here on Wednesday.

The Iraqis, beset by the grim realities of daily carnage back in their troubled homeland, have been a beacon for their nation as they have negotiated their way to the semifinals of the continental tournament.

Iraq has played in a semifinal once before, losing 3-2 to Kuwait after extra time in 1976, and has the incentive of going on to play in its first Asian Cup final in Jakarta next Sunday against either Japan or Saudi Arabia.

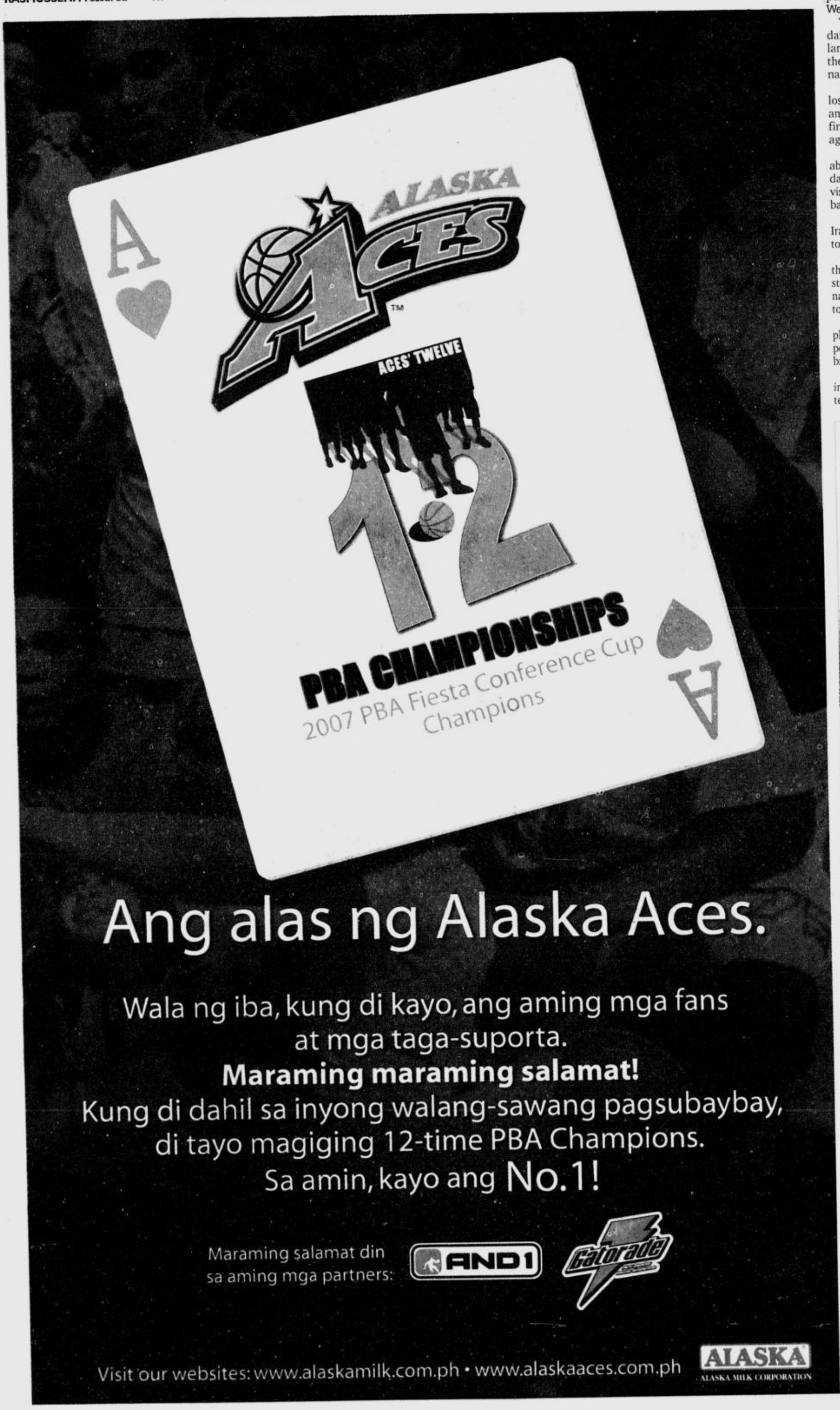
Goalkeeper Noor Sabri, who could conceivably have it all in his own hands if Wednesday's match goes to a penalty shootout, said visions of gun-toting rejoicing in the streets back home after each win has lifted morale.

"Despite the critical situation in Iraq the Iraqi people have been paying great attention to our football team," Noor said Tuesday.

"For the past 31 years we haven't reached the semifinals of the Asian Cup and we've stopped at the quarterfinals (last three tournaments), but now we've made it and it is historic for our football.

"This brings a great happiness to our people as we try to make good use of this by supporting our people in Iraq. "A victory will bring more happiness for Iraq."

Noor said his teammates have been following the celebratory mood of their people on television and the internet. *AFP*



'Turbo' rules bike race; San Andres bags third

ARNON "TURBO" THEPLIB OF AP HONda Thailand topped the Asian 125cc event of the FIM Asian Supercross Championships stated at the Fast Track Circuit in Taguig City yesterday.

Dede Mulyadi of Indonesia finished second while Kenneth San Andres placed third to lead three Filipinos who finished in the top five.

Apart from San Andres, also finishing well were Jovy Saulog at fourth and Rider of the Year Glenn Aguilar, who cucked a spill early in the race to claim fifth spot.

In the Asian 85cc, Arungkot Pinpon of AP Honda Thailand won the event with Bobby Pamungkas of Indonesia placing second and Farhan, also of Indonesia, coming in at third place.

Taguig Mayor Freddie Tinga congratulated all the foreigners and national winners and encouraged more events at the state of the art Fast Track Circuit in Taguig, which is the only internationally accredited racing circuit in Metro Manila that meets international safety standards set by the Swiss-based Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme.

The event was sanctioned by NAMSSA.

Aquino, Morazo top active chess

FIFTH SEED JOHN MORAZO SCORED A FINAL round victory over Alex Ledama, then nipped fellow FEU student Lyndon Sombilon in the tiebreak to capture the juniors division crown in the Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships' second Northern Luzon leg at the CSI The City Mall in Dagupan, Pangasinan over the weekend.

Morazo and Sombilon finished with identical 6.5 points in the seven-round Swiss system tournament. But Morazo took the title and the top P5,000 purse with a higher tiebreak score. The two, along with top seed Benjie Macoy, who finished third, advanced to the grand finals of the Pilipinas Shell-sponsored event in October.

Top seed Prince Aquino played true to form and swept the kiddies division with seven points although he had to nip Bernard Nillo Jr. in the tiebreak to capture the crown worth P4,000 and a spot in the grand finals along with Nillo and John Mark Dimalikwat.

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Business groups draw up legislative wish list

Aim is to boost competitiveness, lure investors

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As of 5 p.m., July 24, 2007

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SEVENTEEN LOCAL AND foreign business groups yesterday called on the 14th Congress to act on a list of a dozen proposed new laws, the early passage of which would greatly help the country achieve higher levels of growth.

In a joint statement, the business chambers and industry associations asked lawmakers to put up an ad hoc committee on competitiveness, which should be composed of key committee chairs, that would advise the Senate and the House of Representatives on such legislative agenda.

The groups include the American, Australian-New Zealand, British, Canadian, Korean, Japanese and European chambers of commerce; the Business Processing Association of the Philippines, Bankers' Association of the Philippines, Financial Executive Institute of the Philippines, Employers Con-

BUSINESS/ B5

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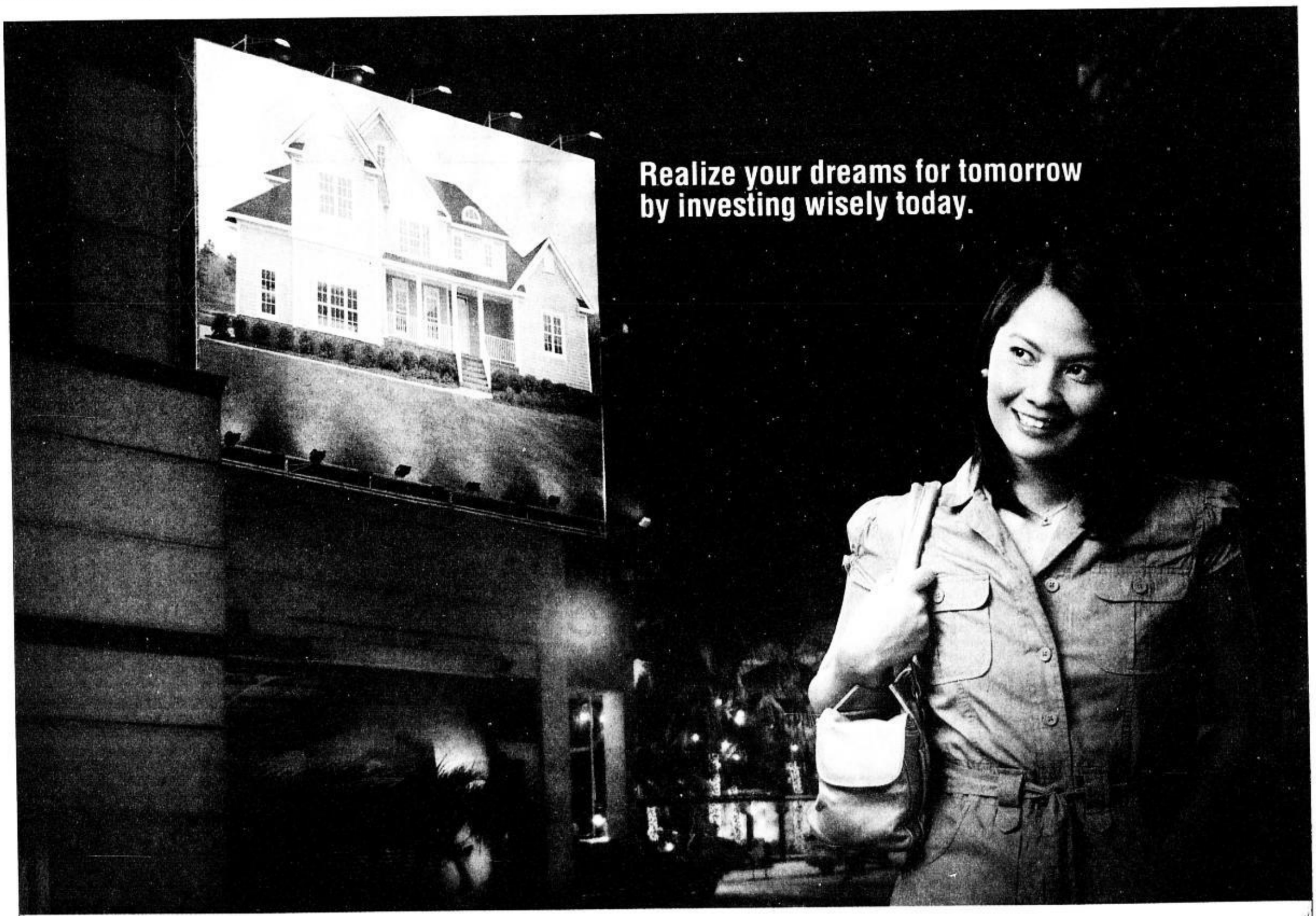

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Agriculture programs up for review

DA wants to ensure growth targets for '07 and '08 will be met

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE is holding a review of the performance of its key programs this week to determine if their growth targets for 2007 are achievable.

DA officials led by Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap are scheduled to present overviews of the programs on the production of major farm commodities, such as rice, corn, coconut, high-value commercial crops and livestock.

In a two-day workshop, agriculture officials would also present status reports on the progress of the department's various projects.

These programs include barangay food terminals, *bagsakan* or drop-off projects, coconut intercropping, irrigation facilities, small water-impounding projects, farm-to-market roads, and post-harvest facilities.

The agriculture sector posted a 3.55-percent growth in the first quarter of the year. This was attributed to the sustained growth of key subsectors such as fisheries, palay and corn, and the recovery of the once-ailing poultry sub-sector.

This growth buoyed the department's hopes of meeting its growth targets of between 4 percent and 5 percent this year and between 7 percent and 8 percent next year.

For its long-term goals, the agriculture department is aiming at increasing the sector's yearly growth rate from the current average of 3-4 percent to at least 5-6 percent in the next decade.

This targeted growth rate, according to agriculture officials, would help ensure better living standards for rural families despite the growing pressure on farm production posed by climate change and environmental degradation.

Compounding the pressure on the farm sector, according to the department, is the growing competition over crop production between the food market and the market that will use these crops for energy generation.

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DFNN group to vie for PSE system contract

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FIRM DIVERsified Financial Network Inc. said it would form a consortium for its bid to develop a new trading system for the Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.

In a disclosure, DFNN said it had approved a plan to enter into an agreement with Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Diversified Technology Solutions Inc. The three firms will form the consortium that will pursue the development of the exchange's new trading system.

DFNN, according to a source, submitted its offer to the PSE last July 23.

Sources said the PSE would set aside at least $3 million for a new trading system that would replace its 13-year-old "Maktrade System."

The "MakTrade System" allows the trading of securities (equities, warrants and bonds) in a "broker-to-broker market." The system accepts, routes, stores and automatically matches orders. After matches take place, the system stores trade records and generates notice of the transaction to the user. It also maintains market regulation and surveillance database. It also allows, aside from main board sales, big block transactions, cross trades, and odd lot transactions. Under this system, brokers can execute transactions on the trading floor and in their offices through remote network connections. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

Lucio Tan Group-CEO appointment praised by New York Life officers, salesforce, rank and file

RUBBING ELBOWS WITH THE CEO
Rank and file employees of NYLIP pose with CEO Nenita Lim-Cruz after the Transition Management seminar held in Canyon Woods, Tagaytay.

Officers and staff of New York Life Insurance (Philippines), Inc. (NYLIP) recently lauded the well-respected Lucio Tan Group in its decision to appoint Nenita Lim Cruz to the company's top post in May 2007, calling the move both "timely and positive" for the future of the company.

Lucio Tan Group, known for its ever-growing conglomerate of highly successful companies both in the country and abroad, recognized the vast potential of NYLIP and hopes to boost the company's performance and confidence with Cruz at the helm.

Already ranked among the top life insurance companies in the Philippines, NYLIP has consistently strived to deliver products and services that showcase the company's hallmark of excellence and financial savvy honed over the years.

The entry of the new CEO marked another milestone for the company, whose sights are now trained on infusing a new era of dynamism and positive change for the organization as a whole. She also conquered the challenges and natural apprehensions posed by the environment of transition induced by the change of ownership of the company.

GAINING FIRST IMPRESSIONS

"Our new CEO is a breath of fresh air and her presence has inspired most of us to see the vast potential of our organization," said NYLIP Policy Owner Services Senior Manager Jovilyn Caluag.

Caluag noted that Cruz was a leader eager to lend guidance and support, encouraging both officers and staff to discover personal avenues to excel within the company.

Wael Ramadan Al-Quqa, Executive Financial Advisor for the Bancassurance Channel of NYLIP and assigned in Davao, described the new CEO "as presence that can be felt by agents and officers even at a distance."

"She makes us feel that the organization is strongly unified. She made sure she got to know all of us by name," Al-Quqa added.

NYLIP Chinatown Branch Sales Manager Sheryl Garcia-So, on the other hand, saw the CEO as a role model that she could emulate.

"She is an achiever and her work ethic was apparent right from the start. She inspires us and motivates us to be one united group, where the backroom and the sales force function as one," stated Garcia-So, also an award-wining achiever who rose from the rank of agent to sales manager in just two years.

INSPIRING WORK ETHICS

Cruz, who took office a little over two months ago, had been busy getting in touch with the company's workforce, both at the headquarters and in the different branches spread around the country.

Straightforward in her approach and guided by a performance-driven work ethic, the CEO immediately won the approval of veteran officers and employees, boosting morale on all fronts in an effective campaign to inspire and showcase to people what the Lucio Tan Group brings to the company.

Although appearing strict and unapproachable at first, the CEO quickly won over the people by displaying a personality that is exactly the opposite. She also exhibited a unique ability to empathize to their needs and concerns. She provided a sense of urgency and an environment where one should get the job done, leading by example by creating measures to address operational issues at the soonest possible time.

Maria Cecilia Sinaguinan, Compensation Assistant for NYLIP Agency Support Services, greatly admired Cruz's straightforwardness, which mirrored her own.

"Our CEO demands a lot from you, but also gives you enough freedom to excel in your own way. She is competency-based, appreciates individuality and embraces diversity as part of a company's natural make up," said Sinaguinan. "She possesses all the qualities of what a true leader should be and inspires the rest of us to follow her lead," she added.

Sinaguinan also expressed that Cruz displayed a lot of common sense, good management and leadership, the most important aspects that inspire employees and management to mesh well together and work towards the future.

Gina Acla Go, NYLIP Marketing Manager, described the CEO's entry as a dynamic and positive influence on the company's officers and staff.

"In the changing landscape of the insurance industry, a leader should be both flexible and adaptable to the times. And from day one, the CEO has showed us that she has the ability to mold the organization and motivate both top level officers and the rank and file with what must be done for the company to reach the next level," Go explained. "She has encouraged communication and collaboration among everyone, making sure that each one of us contributes to the company's continued success. And she provides us with the necessary navigational expertise to guide us on our new-found course," she added.

STREAMLINING PROCESSES

Already a veteran in the stewardship of various companies, which included firms in Telecommunications, Property Development, Investment Banking and Management Consulting, Cruz brought with her a vast experience and professionalism in executive management, operations and finance.

Banking on her operational savvy, Cruz initiated improvements to established processes in order to boost further productivity and achieve greater customer satisfaction to products and services.

Front-line staff that dealt with clients on a day-to-day basis viewed the performance and service-oriented attitude of Cruz as a big plus in a leader.

Officers, agents and staff welcomed the new measures as a means of improving operational procedures and workflow in order to increase turn-around time and productivity. They also adhered to the established steps and procedures, doing away with shortcuts in order to streamline the processes even further.

Eulalia Cabalfin, NYLIP Chief Information Officer, meanwhile welcomed the streamlining of business processes as a first step in a bold new direction for the company.

"The environment of our company today is very exciting because our CEO knows the vital role that Information Systems play in our company's business and she is ready to support improvements to our infrastructure. She is very transparent in her plans for the future and allows us to collaborate," Cabalfin stated. "And because we know the direction that she wants to take the company, we can easily design systems that will help her achieve this," she added.

CEO'S ADDRESS
NYLIP CEO Nenita Lim - Cruz addresses assembled executives of NYLIP and Allied Banking Corporation at the Plenary Session of the company's 2007 National Convention held at the Fort Ilocandia Resort in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte.

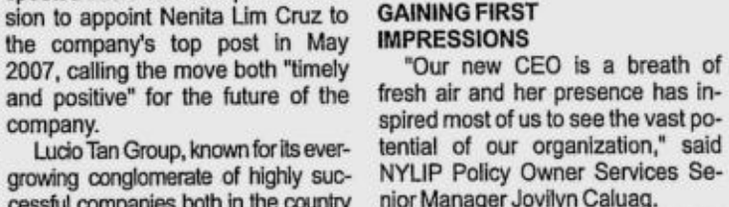
ENSURING A LEGACY OF INTEGRITY AND UNITY

But despite the initial improvements to the company's approaches, Cruz was also noted on placing great value on the individual strengths of each officer and employee, noting that the contribution of each is a positive step towards the future of the company.

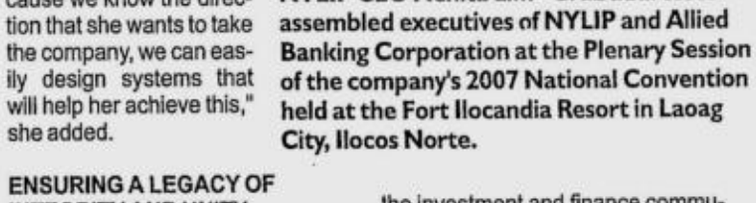
From the officers down to the agents, employees, and staff, Cruz gained esteem and praises for her initial contributions, with many looking forward to the coming months and years of her leadership.

Agents also noted the distinct advantages of having a CEO whose reputation is established on integrity and performance, most especially in the investment and finance communities. They revealed that they are able to network and close deals faster when their clients found out that Cruz was at the helm of NYLIP.

"The CEO has displayed tremendous empathy on the needs and concerns of the officers and employees of NYLIP. She has allowed us to feel that we truly have value in the organization, no matter the size of the role we play," Go revealed. "Thus, we give her back the respect that she gives us in the form of becoming a strong, unified, and highly motivated organization that will soon be poised to become the company to watch out for in the months and years to come."



AN EXECUTIVE GATHERING
Top members of NYLIP's sales force pose with CEO Nenita Lim - Cruz at the company's 2007 National Convention in Fort Ilocandia Resort in Laoag, Ilocos Norte. Also in the photo are other executives from NYLIP and Allied Banking Corporation, and NYLIP's Marketing Team.



AN EXECUTIVE VISIT
Newly installed CEO Nenita Lim - Cruz gets to know the agents from NYLIP's Baguio Branch.

NSO reports sharp drop in volume of production

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR continued to be a weak performer, sustaining a year-on-year decline in production volume.

The Volume of Production Index (VoPI) hit -7.1 percent in May, marking a faster decline than the 1.6 percent recorded in April, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

NSO records showed that the volume of manufacturing output had been declining since the start of the year. It was recorded at -0.4 percent in January, -13.9 percent in February, and -6.8 percent in March.

Even if measured in terms of value, manufacturing output also registered a year-on-year drop. Value of Production Index (VaPI), which takes into account price movements, stood at -5.5 percent in May—worse than the zero growth figure posted in April.

According to Jonathan Ravelas, market strategist at Banco de Oro, the drop in VoPI and VaPI indicated that the manufacturing industry was a weak contributor to the economy's growth.

Ravelas said the business climate was conducive for the industry sector, especially for call center operators and other business process outsourcing firms, but not for manufacturers.

Industry players earlier said that the high cost of electricity and labor were but some of the things that burdened the manufacturing industry, which is capital- and labor-intensive.

The poor performance of the manufacturing sector, as shown by the NSO's Monthly Integrated Survey of Selected Industries (Missi), earlier raised confusion over the sector's true state.

NSO/ B6

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THE GURUS

Professor Danilo A. Antonio, is a member of the Asian Center for Entrepreneurship [ACE] core faculty as a Guru in the Master in Entrepreneurship [ME] Program. Prof. Antonio also teaches the Development of Enterprise (DE) and Real Estate/Property Management and Finance electives in the Master in Business Administration Program. Prof. Antonio remains active in the Philippine Real Estate industry, where he has accumulated over 27 years of experience in various aspects of the property business. He holds a Master in Business Management degree (With Distinction) from the Asian Institute of Management and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics Degree (Summa Cum Laude) from De La Salle University.

Professor Alejandrino J. Ferreria Ed.D, is the Bank of America Foundation Professor of Business Management at AIM. From 2002 to 2004, he was the Dean of the AIM Asian Center for Entrepreneurship. Prior to his career in AIM, he also held senior executive positions at Guevarra Enterprises (Guevent), and helped form Unifoods International Corporation (post-mix distributor of Pepsi-Cola). Prof. Ferreria, who holds a Bachelor of Science in Management from Ateneo de Manila and an MBA from the University of the Philippines, currently sits on the boards of Goodyear Philippines, Pascual Laboratories, Construction Mgmt. & Dev't. Foundation, Filipino Car Foundation, and Channel Technologies.

Professor Tomas B. Lopez is the Don Demetrio Tuason Professor of Agribusiness at AIM, and AIM's Guru of services marketing and the emerging field of one-to-one marketing. A graduate of AIM's Master in Management program (with Distinction), his areas of specialization include Social Marketing, Development Communication, Corporate Social Responsibility, Entrepreneurship, Strategic Management, and Information Technology. He is President and CEO of the Club Noah Group of Companies operating the world-famous Club Noah-Isabelle in Northern Palawan. He is co-founder of Seair, an airline serving tourist destinations in Palawan, Surigao and Boracay, currently serves as President of the University of Makati.

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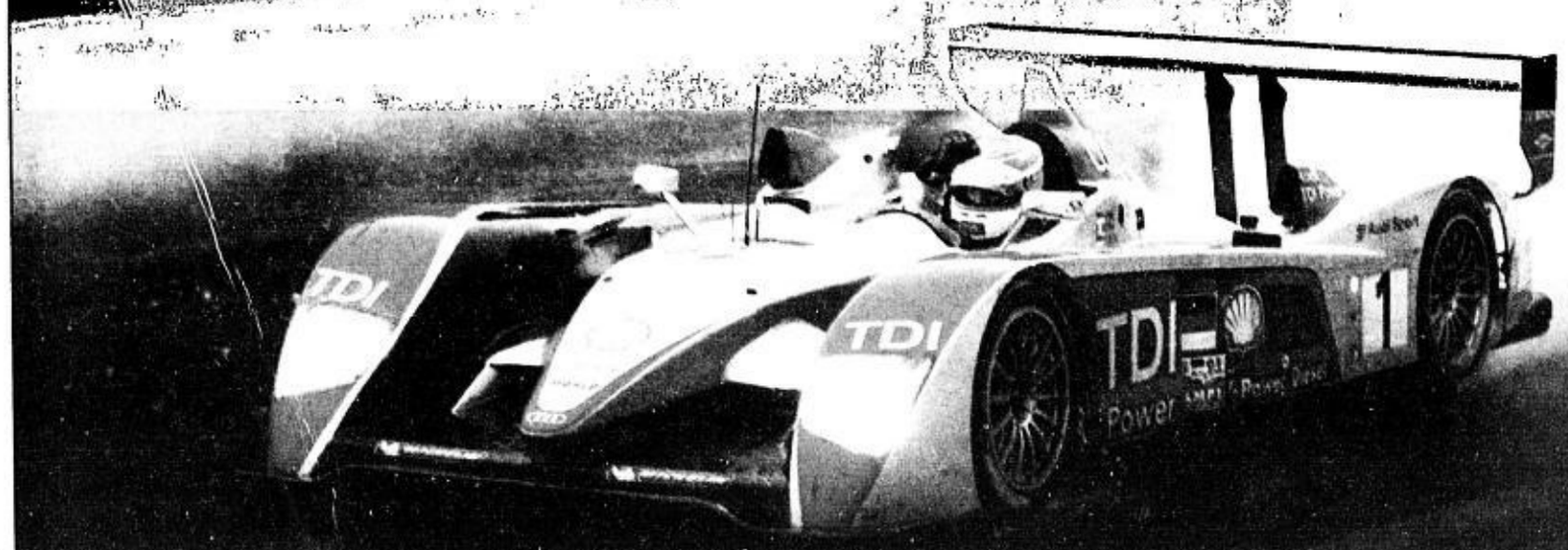

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In Loving Memory

On the 5th Death Anniversary
of our Dearly Beloved

ATTY. DAISY G. ZAMBRANO

"Tita Ganda"

28 December 1948 – 25 July 2002

A Memorial Service in celebration of the life once shared with her will be held on Saturday, July 28, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. at the Court of Meditation, Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City.

She lives on in our hearts.

Mamang Pinay, Leni, Boy & Angie, Mely & Art, Glad & Dave; Lendell & Michelle, Lester & Tina, Retzell & Jeff, Leanne & Pope, Dino, Jaja, Kevin, Dazha, Alain; Jelai, Trista, Brie.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and who ever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

Our Dearly Beloved

Ang Ka Chao

(widow of **Que Kok Hee**)

Now peacefully rests in the infinite grace and goodness of our Lord on the 22nd day of July 2007 at the age of 98.

A beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt and friend, she will be missed most by her

children

Antonio (†) and **Ligaya Co**
Benjamin and **Helen Yao**
Samuel (†) and **Teresita Co**
Felipe and **Rima Del Rosario**
Danilo and **Sally So**

grandchildren

Julie, Dory, Anne, Marcelino, Aquino
Tiffany, Wendalynne (†), Eunice, Jasper
Victor, Vernadette, Venedick, Vinzon
Marco, Ciarra, Miguel, Gian
Candice, Iris, Denise

and great-grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at the Sanctuarium, 739 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, 27th of July 2007, 11:00 a.m. at Chinese Cemetery.

Notify family and friends of a loved one who had just passed away.

We accept death notices, announcing details of the person's wake and interment. For a very affordable fee you can reach out to everyone who have been a part of the life of your dearly departed. For more information, you may contact Inquirer Classifieds at (02)897 8425.

Our Beloved

Commodore JOSE S. FRANCISCO, AFP (Ret.)

Flag Officer-in-Command, PN 1949-1961

has gone to his Maker on July 23, 2007
at the age of 98.

His wife **Pacita** (†), children **Jun** (†) and **Baby**, **Rene** and **Renee**, **Monina** and **Rudy** (†), **Linda**, **Caloy** and **Fran**, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Philippine Navy Holy Child Chapel, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, July 28, 2007 at 9:00 AM. Interment will follow at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

In lieu of flowers, we request donations to Gawad Kalinga to house a poor family in memory of our Dad.

In Loving Memory

On the
12TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of

Estela M. Peñaflorida

who passed away on 26 July 1995.

Masses will be offered Thursday, 26 July 2007 at the following:

Sanctuario de San Antonio, *Forbes Park*	12:15 NN
Sanctuario de San Jose, *Greenhills*	7:15 AM
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, *Magallanes*	6:00 PM
Our Lady of Beautiful Love, *Merville*	6:00 PM
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice, *U.P.*	6:00 PM
St. Joseph's Church, *Pototan, Iloilo*	5:30 AM
St. Clement's Church, *La Paz, Iloilo*	5:30 PM

The family requests relatives, friends, and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

"I thank you, O Lord, with all my heart, for you have heard the word of my lips. You answered me when I called; you made me strong and bold."
Psalm 138:1,3

Please be with us in thanking the Lord for the wonderful gift of Aurora (Babes) E. Perez, daughter of Daniel C. Perez (†) and Flora Esquivel Perez, our Tita Babes, who joined our Creator on July 22, 2007. Her remains lie in state at 150 Perez St.,Tanawan, Bustos, Bulacan.

Interment is scheduled on July 26, 2007. Mass at nine in the morning.

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Bangko Sentral seen easing forex rules further

Move aimed at slowing peso rise against the US dollar

By Daxim L. Lucas

MONETARY AUTHORITIES are planning to further liberalize the foreign exchange regime in the coming weeks in an effort to slow the rapid appreciation of the peso against the US dollar.

In an interview with reporters, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr. said the rules limiting local residents from buying foreign currency would be further relaxed within the quarter.

The central bank chief replied in the affirmative when asked whether the fresh liberalization round would include the relaxation of documentary requirements on dollar purchases and encouraging more overseas investments for locals.

He declined, however, to give more details.

"We will implement these [changes in the rules] soon," Tetangco said. "We want to give banks and nonbanks greater latitude in investments."

The central bank hopes that making it easier for residents to buy foreign currencies and to invest overseas will help it rein in the peso's sharp rise, which Tetangco said had already become a cause for concern.

Apart from impacting negatively on the export sector, the BSP chief said the rapid appreciation of the peso was also causing volatility in the foreign exchange market.

Tetangco's comments helped cool the peso yesterday afternoon after the local currency hit a fresh seven-year high during trading in the morning.

At the Philippine Dealing System (PDS), the peso hit 44.70 to the dollar, ignoring warnings made by credit watcher Fitch Ratings that the government would likely exceed its budget deficit cap of P63 billion this year.

The peso ended the session at 44.82 to $1, which was one centavo weaker than the previous day's close of 44.81.

A total of $482 million changed hands during yesterday's trading.

Last February, the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board relaxed foreign exchange rules, allowing banks and individuals to purchase more dollars.

The changes which were implemented last April included a higher amount of foreign exchange that residents can buy from banks without supporting documents from $5,000 to $10,000.

BSP also increased the maximum offshore investments of residents without central bank approval and registration from $6 million to $12 million a year and raised the overbought limit of banks from 2.5 percent of unimpaired capital to 20 percent with an absolute limit of $50 million.

The central bank also waived the notarization requirement for buyers of foreign exchange.

At that time, Tetangco said that "improving macroeconomic fundamentals as well as ongoing banking, capital market and institutional reforms provide a favorable setting for the comprehensive review and gradual reform of the existing foreign exchange regulatory framework."

The initial round of liberalization of forex rules, however, failed to slow down the peso's rise.

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CBCP: What sayeth thou about communists?

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONference of the Philippines (CBCP) does not hesitate to enter into the political arena in defense of the laity.

For example, the CBCP asked for the outright repeal of the mining law for environmental reasons. Fortunately for the country, President Macapagal-Arroyo politely listened but, just as politely, turned down the bishops.

On the heels of the May 14 elections, the CBCP put together a seven-point agenda for electoral reform. If the government listens to the bishops, the agenda will keep the political leaders busy for at least the next three years.

The bishops have frowned on the reported tit-for-tat kidnapping of the family of the alleged leader of Father Bossi's kidnappers.

The bishops have not been able to keep their mouths shut on almost any publicity. But, incredibly, the CBCP has not said one single word about the CPF/NPA and the communist groups in the cities, such as Bayan Muna, Akbayan, Partido ng Manggagawa, Anak Pawis, Gabriela and Migrante (have I missed anyone?).

It looks like the CBCP views these communist groups in the cities as part of the democratic scene. If so, CBCP is looking at the communist problem from the wrong end.

The United States and the European Union classify the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and its armed component, the New Peoples Army (NPA), as terrorist organizations. But it is the poorest of the poor laity in the farthest barrios that are in the terror grip of the NPA. Everything that the poor faithful grows and raises—rice and corn, coconuts and copra, rattan and other forest products, cattle and hogs—are taxed 10 percent by the NPA.

The blood money extorted from the poor at the point of an Armalite rifle ends up in Manila. Someone once told me the communist national treasurer lived in one of the plush villages in Makati. And why not? He certainly can afford the luxury.

The money finances the so-called political struggle in the cities around the country: The public rallies, the TV and radio coverage, and, finally, the party-list candidacies: Some of it probably ends up in Holland to support Jose Maria Sison's luxurious life. The anti-Arroyo rally at the Batasan during the State of the Nation Address last Monday must have cost P1,000 per head.

The Armed Forces estimates the annual take of the NPA in the hundreds of millions of pesos a year. This is probably an exaggeration, but the Communist Party is reputedly the richest political group in the country.

The bishops are the successors of the Apostles. They are the shepherds of the flock. But it looks like the CBCP considers the communists in the cities as the flock. If so, the bishops are wrong. Their real flock is the poor laity in the distant barrios suffering under the terror grip of the NPA.

By saying absolutely nothing against the CPP/NPA terrorist organizations and the communist front groups in the cities, the shepherds have abandoned their flock.

The duty of tending to the flock includes protecting and defending the flock from the wolves that prey on it.

If I were the confessor of the CBCP, I would send them all, as penance for their sins, to the distant barrios to ask the poor laity for forgiveness. Then, and only then, would I grant them absolution.

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BTr names 15 dealers of 3-, 5-yr retail bonds

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF THE TREASURY has named the 15 banks that qualified to serve as dealers for the 3-year and 5-year Retail Treasury Bonds (RTBs) currently being offered to the public.

These are Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., BPI Capital, First Metro Investment Corp., Philippine National Bank, BDO Universal bank, Land Bank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines, BDO Capital Corp., Citibank N.A., China Banking Corp., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Allied Banking Corp., Multinational Investment Bancorp., Deutsche Bank and ING.

Last Monday, the government held a price-setting auction for the RTBs. The 3-year RTBs fetched an interest rate of 6.875 percent, while the 5-year RTBs fetched 7.125 percent.

The offering of the retail bonds started last Monday and would end on July 30.

Officials of the BTr and those of the government's issue managers will conduct a road show in Cebu on July 25 and another in Davao on July 26 to invite potential investors to buy RTBs.

First Metro Investment Corp. and BPI Capital Corp. have been tapped to serve as issue managers.

Unlike regular government securities, RTBs are intended for individuals or small investors. The minimum investment requirement was set at only P5,000.

The Treasury earlier said banks were required to allocate at least 50 percent of their RTBs for small investors.

First Metro earlier said it was expecting demand for RTBs to reach at least P40 billion. It said the RTBs were expected to attract investors who were looking for for virtually risk-free securities.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan earlier said the treasury bill auction supposedly scheduled on Monday had been canceled, as the government intended to raise its required borrowings through the RTB offering. The supposed auction for regular treasury bonds yesterday was also canceled.

Business groups . . .

From page B1

federation of the Philippines, Philippine Exporters Confederation, Makati Business Club, Management Association of the Philippines, Philippine Association of Multinational Companies, Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines, and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

These groups have been active in the National Competitiveness Council, a collaboration between the government and the private sector, in drawing up an action agenda aimed at making the country more attractive to investors.

Their legislative wish list called for changes in the Build-Operate-Transfer law, the Local Government Code, the Customs Brokers Act and the Magna Carta for Small and Medium Enterprise Act.

They also asked for new laws that cover the creation of a credit information system, ensuring freedom of access to information, reforming land administration, institutionalizing the use and promotion of renewable energy, and simplifying the taxation on net income.

The groups also asked for laws that would rationalize taxes on the financial sector, fiscal incentives and restrictions on foreign investment.

"(These laws) would strengthen the country's competitiveness and increase the country's growth and social development," they said. "Such positive conditions present great opportunities for the Philippines to build on recent gains and push the gross domestic product growth to 7 percent and higher."

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
GHL IMMIGRATION SPECIALISTS & CONSULTANCY INC. 7/F VNP Bldg., Pedro Gil St., Ermita, Manila	Sungyoul Park	Consultant
MANILA SEOUL WEEKLY INTERNATIONAL INCORPORATED 1501 The Centerpoint Bldg., Dona Julia Vargas Ave. cor. Garnet St., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Minsoo Jang	Reporter
*YOU-NET ENTERPRISE NETWORK SOLUTION INC. Unit 504 One Corporate Plaza, 845 Arnaiz Ave., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Nobuaki Enda	General Manager
WON KWANG INTERNATIONAL TRADING CORP. JPL Bldg. cor. Roxas Blvd. & Pedro Gil St., Ermita, Manila	Dongwook Kim	Vice President
HARVARD ACADEMY LANGUAGE EDUCATION, INC. 3/F Jocfer Bldg., Commonwealth Ave., Diliman, Quezon City	Jin Seung Jung	General Manager
GOLDEN EAST MARINE PRODUCTS, INC. 1296 EDSA, Apolonio Samson, Quezon City	Yichun Wu	Computer Accounting/ Quality Control
SINGULARITY INC. 11-A Country Space 1 Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat, Makati City	Manuel Roberto Laguardia Castillo	Vice-President
EEP PHONE ENGLISH SYSTEM, INC. 1040 EDSA, Magallanes Village, Makati City	Mijin Kim	Account Officer
EEP PHONE ENGLISH SYSTEM, INC. 1040 EDSA Magallanes Village, Makati City	Mi Young Kim	Account Officer
EEP PHONE ENGLISH SYSTEM, INC. 1040 EDSA, Magallanes Village, Makati City	Shinhwa Lee	Account Officer

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

ISABEL G. PANGANIBAN-ORTIGUERRA
Acting Regional Director

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 338-2013 & 303-5920.

(PDI–July 25, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
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E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph * Website: http://www.sss.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
IAEB No. 2007-031-Goods

COMPREHENSIVE PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE FOR THE EIGHT (8) SETS PRECISION AIR CONDITIONING UNIT (PACU) INSTALLED AT THE SSS MAIN OFFICE

1. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS), through the M/R – F&E intends to apply the sum of P4,664,809.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Comprehensive Preventive Maintenance for the 8 sets PACU Installed at the SSS Main office (5-year Contract). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
2. The SSS now invites Bids from eligible bidders for the Comprehensive Preventive Maintenance for the 8 sets PACU installed at the SSS Main Office. Delivery of the GOODS/SERVICES is required upon signing of the contract/receipt of Job Order (JO). The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instruction to Bidders (ITB).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section I of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of P2,500.00. The method of payment will be on a cash basis payable at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg., Ground Floor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **10 August 2007 at 2:00 p.m.** at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the Green Room 12th Floor, SSS Main Building on **24 August 2007 not later than 2:00 p.m.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount indicated in the Bid Tender Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be held at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City on **24 August 2007 at 2:00 p.m.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the given address.
9. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

Bids and Awards Committee
The Secretariat
6th Floor, SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. #922-2891; 924-7380; 920-6401 local 5491
Email – bac@sss.gov.ph
Facsimile number – (02) 924-7380

(Sgd.) THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – July 25, 2007)

Veggie farmers slam LGU collection of 'road tax'

From farm to market–and provinces in between–growers pay dues

By Amy R. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S VEGETABLE growers have appealed to the government to stop the imposition of a "road tax" on vegetables being transported to Metro Manila.

According to Lyndon Tan, president of the Region IV Vegetable Council, the problem persists even after the Department of Agriculture has assured farm growers that charges on the goods would be removed under the government's food lane program.

Tan said provincial governments continue to impose fees and taxes despite the presence of a Department of Interior and Local Government order, suspending the collection of such taxes.

The DILG issued the memorandum circular last year.

Similar to a pass, the stickers provincial governments issue to vegetable growers, cost anywhere from P500 to P1000.

With the stickers, vegetable transporters are exempted from the truck ban.

Tan said that the vegetable growers need to secure the stickers from officials of all the provinces that happen to lie in their farm-to-market route.

Each local government issues its own set of stickers.

Tan said vegetable growers from Region IV have repeatedly asked the DA to help them resolve the problems brought on by the truck ban, which prevented them from directly delivering their produce to buyers, particularly those in Metro Manila.

This, he said, adds to the cost of the vegetables sold in markets.

In a meeting held in Malacañang last week, Tan said vegetable growers continue to be harassed by various provincial governments.

Agriculture Undersecretary Salvador Salacup admitted that LGUs have the mandate to raise revenues through the issuance of local ordinances.

He added that the DA had earlier requested the DILG to "facilitate the efficient and timely delivery of local produce to city centers."

Salacup also said that Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap would again talk to DILG Secretary Ronaldo Puno to press the matter.

Because of the truck ban, Tan said, vegetable growers would often sell their produce to middlemen and traders, who consequently jack up prices.

This move makes the produce way more expensive than farmgate prices—to the disadvantage of consumers.

Also because of the truck ban, some vegetable producers resort to hiring or buying smaller vans to be able to deliver their produce.

The costs of the vehicles, fuel and the hiring of extra workers are eventually passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices.

Small farmers bat for bill on agri reform extension

SMALL FARMERS AND OTHER agrarian reform advocates have expressed their support for the proposed bill extending the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, according to nongovernment organization Centro Saka Inc.

Leaders of the CARP Movement said the bill would help ensure the full implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law during the proposed seven-year extension period.

"The bill primarily aims to ensure full funding of the program, accelerate land distribution completion and strengthen support services and agrarian justice delivery," said Pakisama chair Ka Crispin Aguelo.

He added the bill, which was filed by Akbayan party-list Rep. Riza Hontiveros-Baraquel, provides that Certificates of Land Ownership Award cannot be declared void.

The proposed bill also seeks to create an interagency committee on support services and an oversight committee to assess the Department of Agrarian Reform's annual land distribution performance.

Samahang 53 Ektarya ng Macabud chair Elvie Baladad said they are enlisting the support of both the government and private sector to facilitate the bill's passage.

"Government should have no second thoughts about supporting the ... bill because agrarian reform is the centerpiece of its asset reform and social justice program," she said.

Apart from Rep. Baraquel, Rep. Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada III and Carlos Padilla have likewise pledged to support and co-sponsor the extension-with-reforms bill.

The leaders of the Reform CARP Movement said they are ready to challenge big landowners and anti-agrarian reform advocates who are said to be bent on stopping the extension of the agrarian reform program.

"The CARP is a restitution program founded on the need to provide social justice for the landless farmers and farm workers by ensuring the protection of their economic and social rights," Paragos-Pilipinas Chair Ka Jimmy Tadeo said.

Calls to extend the agrarian reform program have been mounting as a result of the dismal land distribution accomplishments since the CARP began in 1988.

Approval of the bill would not only ensure continued funding for the program but also see to the distribution of some 1.3 million hectares of farmland. *Amy R. Remo*

Property firm Anchor Land set to maximize IPO price

By Daxim L. Lucas

PROPERTY DEVELOPER ANCHOR Land Holdings Inc. expects to price its initial public offering (IPO) near the top of its indicative range due to strong demand from the investing public, the issue's underwriter said.

In a briefing for investors, BDO Capital & Investment Corp. president Ed Francisco said that orders for Anchor Land's IPO have almost equaled the number of shares on offer.

"The [order] book for this issue is almost done," he said. "Because of this, we are pricing the stock near the higher end, in fact almost near the top."

The company was scheduled to submit its final price to regulators last night after press time.

Anchor Land initially gave a pricing range of P4.97 to P8.94 for its IPO. At the top end of the range, the company expects to raise over P700 million in gross proceeds, although the firm will receive only about P600 million net of underwriting fees and costs.

According to Anchor Land vice chair Steve Li, the proceeds would be used to fund additional real estate projects and acquire more land for future developments.

Broken down further, the company said that up to P350 million would be used to acquire new land, P200 million would be used to develop a high-rise residential property in Parañaque City, while the remaining P100 million would be used to pay off existing obligations.

After the IPO, the firm would have a market capitalization of close to P3 billion, and a price-earnings ratio of approximately 18 times over expected 2007 earnings of P161.4 million.

In a statement, Li said the company would like to take advantage of existing financial and real estate market conditions, "which have been soaring to great heights over the last two years."

During this time, the company has "consistently been making income in excess of P50 million per year," the company said.

Li is optimistic about the growth of the real estate industry, particularly the residential condominium segment.

"Given the current economic condition, the market is really booming, and there are huge foreign investments coming in," he said. "Interest rates are also very low, which makes a lot of projects affordable to buyers. I think this will continue for the next two to three years."

The company's shares are set to be listed on Aug. 8.

NSO reports sharp . . . From page B3

This was because, according to the National Income Accounts, the manufacturing sector had a hand in the country's robust growth in the first quarter when it reported a higher output during the period.

The National Income Accounts records the country's economic growth and contributors to the growth in a given period.

The National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) had explained that the Missi covers only "organized" manufacturing firms in its samples.

"Organized" firms are those that are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission or belong to a recognized industry association.

On the other hand, the National Accounts takes a wider sample, which includes "unorganized" industry members, or small-scale producers not registered with the SEC, the NSCB said.

Despite the explanation, Victor Abola, economics professor from the University of Asia and the Pacific, said that parts of the Missi report were dubious. He suggested for the NSO to update its samples to see whether there would be a need to revise Missi reports.

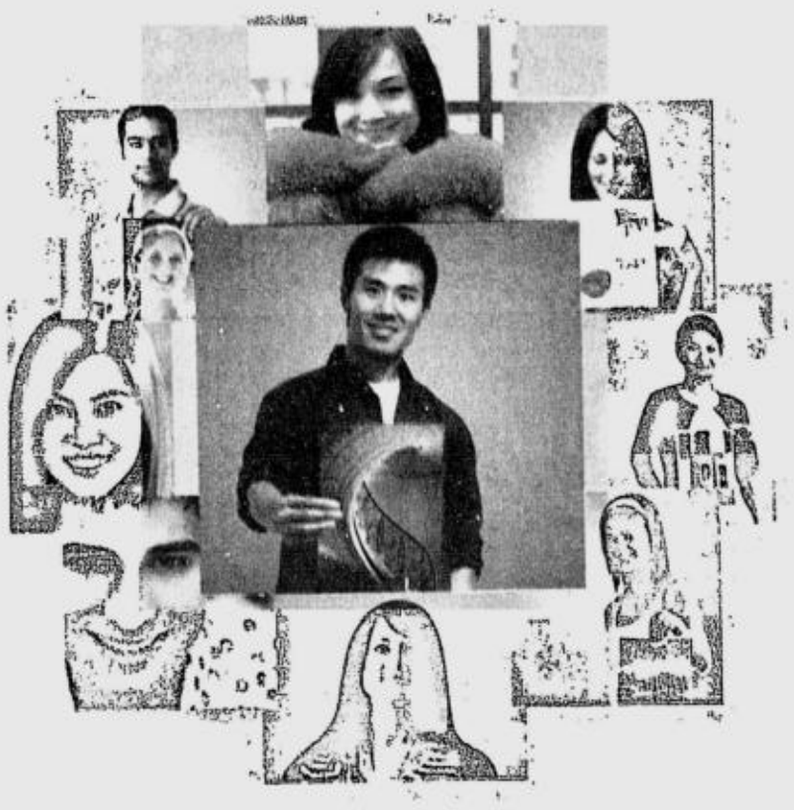
Abola noted that electricity sale was a common tool used in determining whether the manufacturing sector's output was on the decline. He noted that electricity sale by the Manila Electric Co. increased by 5.8 percent in May from a year ago.

According to the Missi, the manufacturing sector's sales figures in May also proved to be discouraging. Volume of net sales stood at -1.9 percent, a reversal of the 1.1 percent growth of the previous month.

The Missi also said that value of net sales posted zero growth in May, dropping from the 3.3-percent rise in April.

Producers Price Index, which measures the increase in factory prices of locally produced goods, settled at 1.7 percent in May from 1.6 percent the previous month.

Average capacity utilization rate, which measures how much of the sector's production capacity was actually used, was recorded at 80.2 percent in May, almost unchanged from the 80.1 percent in April.



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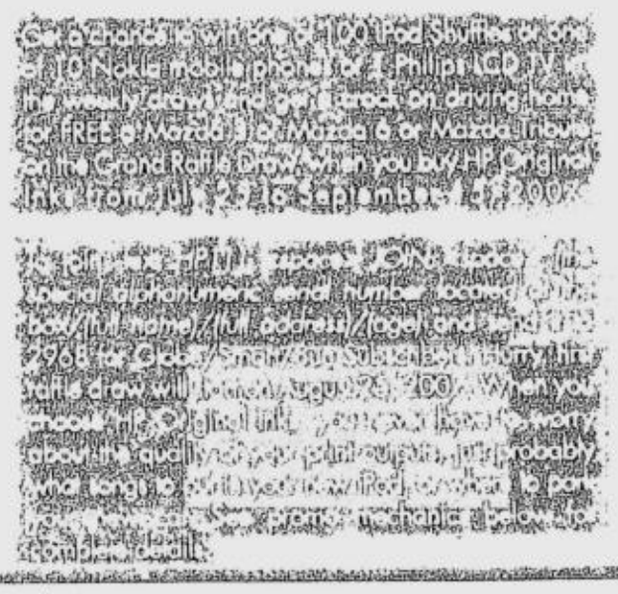

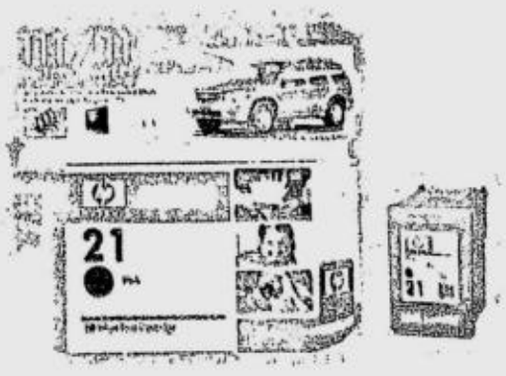

Promotion Mechanics:

1. Promo period is from July 25 to September 15, 2007 with nationwide coverage.
2. Check the ink cartridge box of the participating HP Inks (HP15, HP21, HP22, HP27, HP28, HP56 and HP78) for a specified alphanumeric serial number.
3. To join, text *HP111<space> JOIN <space> (the special alphanumeric serial number located at the box/(full name)/(full address)/(age)* and send it to 2968 for Globe/Smart/Sun Subscribers. Sample Entry: HP111 JOIN ZFRGSk14268/ TinaReyes/1332 E. Rodriguez st., Q.C./23
4. After sending the entry, end user will automatically receive a confirmation text message that his/her entry has been received and officially registered.
5. There will be a weekly electronic raffle draw starting on August 25 and every Wednesday thereafter for 11 consecutive weeks.
   The following are the prizes to be given away:
   a) 100 units of iPod Shuffles;
   b) 10 units of Nokia N95 Mobile Phones; and
   c) 1 unit of Philips LCD TV.
6. Participant can only win once in the weekly raffle draws. All winning and non-winning entries in the weekly draws will automatically be included in the grand raffle draw.
7. The grand raffle draw will be on November 17, 2007, where the following prizes will be given away:
   a) 100 units of iPod Shuffles;
   b) 10 units of Nokia N95 Mobile Phones;
   c) 1 unit of Philips LCD TV;
   d) 1 unit Mazda 3 4-door sedan;
   e) 1 unit Mazda 6 4-door sedan; and
   f) 1 unit Mazda Tribute SUV
8. All winners will be notified via phone call and registered mail. This includes instructions on how to claim their winnings.
9. To be able to claim the prize item, Metro Manila and provincial winners must be able to present the following documents cited below, via fax or email prior to delivery.
   a) Ink cartridge box showing the winning alphanumeric serial number
   b) Sales invoice/official receipt, as proof of purchase;
   c) Two (2) valid IDs, such as passport, voter's ID, etc.
10. Winners of Nokia N95 Mobile Phone, Philips LCD TV and Mazda Cars will shoulder the appropriate taxes.
11. All winners will shoulder the delivery charges of their winnings.
12. Color/variant of prizes may be different from the pictures and subject to availability.
13. Employees of Hewlett-Packard Philippines Corporation, its distributors, ad agencies and suppliers including their relatives up to the third degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified in this promo.
14. Prizes not claimed within 60 days from end of the promo period will be forfeited in favor of Hewlett-Packard Philippines Corporation (with prior DTI approval).

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Per DTI Permit No. 2458, Series of 2007.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 24, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.3	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	16,000
73	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	70	70	69	69	450,700
73.5	51	Bank of the Philippine Islands	70	70	70	70	1,282,400
935	630	China Banking Corp.	890	890	885	885	1,240
20.25	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	300
0.63	0.37	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.54	1,020,000
75.5	35.5	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company	70	70	68.5	68.5	1,484,100
68	39	Philippine Savings Bank	64.5	64.5	64.5	64.5	2,000
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	36	36	35	35.5	1,509,500
90	46.5	Security Bank Corp.	85.5	85.5	84.5	85	315,100
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	63	63.5	63	63.5	219,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	78,000
1.5	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.2	230,000
16.25	1.74	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	13.75	13.75	13	13.25	819,800
8.8	3.9	Filipino Fund Inc.	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	2,000
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Hldgs Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	10,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	42	42	5,000
1,725.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,680.00	1,680.00	1,680.00	1,680.00	50
5	4.05	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.3	4.35	4.3	4.3	3,097,000
3.1	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.5	2.55	2.5	2.55	209,000
1,005.00	212	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	840	845	830	845	8,110
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,200.00	2,200.00	2,200.00	2,200.00	550
1.94	1.28	iVantage Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	227,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	5.5	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.6	11,424,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.46	0.46	1,190,000
69.5	41.5	First Gen Corp.	68	69	68	68	1,081,500
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	89	90	87.5	87.5	273,200
15	7.6	Manila Water Company Inc.	15	15	14.5	14.5	1,758,000
116	15	Manila Electric Company A	107	107	103	104	149,610
118	24	Manila Electric Company B	108	108	105	105	1,068,640
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.7	7	6.7	6.7	29,623,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	6.3	6.4	6.2	6.2	3,659,000
14.75	11.5	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	11.75	12	11.75	11.75	680,300
1.9	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.42	1.46	3,286,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.7	6.1	5.7	5.7	191,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.24	2.24	2.2	2.22	246,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	25.5	25.5	25	25	88,000
61	31.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	53	53.5	52.5	52.5	772,900
1.96	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.88	1.9	1,552,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.65	2.7	2.65	2.7	515,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. A	74	74.5	73.5	74.5	78,300
88	69.5	San Miguel Corp. B	82	82	81	81.5	159,600
0.62	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
4.7	2	Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.4	4.4	4.35	4.35	85,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.75	27,500
0.55	0.2	Vitarich Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.43	0.43	500,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.53	EEI Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	3,160,000
15	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	12.5	14.5	12.5	14.5	45,300
9.2	4.3	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.7	1,609,000
2	0.75	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.58	1.64	55,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	3,460,000
1.34	0.8	Interphil Laboratories Inc. A	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	100,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	95,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.0675	Philcop Resources Inc.	0.6	0.62	0.58	0.58	161,620,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.8	A. Soriano Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	3,000
0.17	0.023	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	27,420,000
1.28	0.195	APC Group Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	11,613,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	2.48	2.55	2.48	2.55	262,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. B	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	53,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. A	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	171,100,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	21,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	8.2	8.5	8.1	8.2	7,905,000
0.021	0.007	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	493,300,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6	6	6	6	10,256,000
1.38	0.48	Alsons Cons. Resources Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	110,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.48	2.48	4,120,000
590	333.33	Ayala Corp.	575	580	570	570	572,410
14.5	6.96	Bacnotan Cons. Industries Inc.	14	14	13.5	13.5	12,700
6.9	0.8	Balabac Res. and Holdings Co. Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.3	5.5	1,149,000
5.8	1.06	Benpres Holdings Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	5,852,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.7	9.7	9.5	9.5	581,000
2.5	0.7	F and J Princ.e Holdings Corp. A	1.9	2.5	1.9	2.12	523,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	7.4	7.4	7.2	7.2	1,785,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	55,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12	12	11.75	11.75	1,201,000
5.9	0.61	Jollitville Holdings Corp.	3.85	4	3.65	3.75	1,944,000
2.6	1	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. A	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	45,000
2.65	1.42	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. B	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	100,000
0.95	0.13	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	300,000
11.5	0.26	Multitech Investments Corp.	8	8.2	7.8	8	2,236,000
8.2	1.3	PAL Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.1	7.6	7.8	1,712,000
1.54	0.8	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	50,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.66	0.68	0.63	0.63	40,020,000
452.5	202.36	SM Investments Corp.	440	440	432.5	437.5	211,970
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.53	13,280,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.93	150,000
1.6	0.8	South China Resources Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.42	370,000
2.8	0.8	Vivant Corp.	2	2.8	2	2.8	3,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.63	0.64	0.59	0.63	16,020,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.78	A Brown Company Inc.	2	2.14	2	2.12	12,492,000
19.25	10.21	Ayala Land Inc.	18	18.25	18	18.25	11,286,200
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.58	27,659,000
4.7	2.1	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.5	574,000
2.9	1	Cityland Development Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2,000
0.86	0.27	Crown Equities Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.78	1,000,000
0.83	0.22	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.67	0.7	0.64	0.64	68,850,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.84	0.85	0.84	0.85	14,070,000
0.47	0.038	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.36	0.4	0.36	0.37	83,090,000
1.38	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.2	1.32	1.2	1.32	47,731,000
2.44	1.06	Filinvest Land Inc.	2.12	2.14	2.1	2.12	43,390,000
0.49	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. A	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	1,330,000
0.5	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.43	170,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	17,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	1,370,000
1.12	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.86	0.86	1,360,000
4.4	1.3	Megaworld Corp.	4.1	4.1	4	4.05	15,746,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.15	4.15	102,000
0.7	0.11	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.52	0.53	0.5	0.5	3,280,000
0.87	0.26	Phil. Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.69	0.7	0.68	0.69	25,560,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.7	449,000
23	10.75	Robinson Land Corp.	20.5	20.5	19.75	19.75	1,160,600
5.9	1.28	SM Development Corp.	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.9	1,019,000
13.5	6.08	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	13	13	12.5	12.5	11,028,100
1.34	0.55	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.98	1	0.95	0.98	3,760,000
0.49	0.0675	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.39	37,970,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	15.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	37.5	37.5	36.5	37	31,600
1.14	0.98	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	138,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.16	Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.52	2,228,000
1,445.00	960	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,365.00	1,375.00	1,365.00	1,370.00	134,740
2,820.00	1,890.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,690.00	2,690.00	2,655.00	2,655.00	282,420
7.9	3.45	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.3	6,025,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,240,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	10	10	9.7	9.7	37,000
10.5	2	IPVG Corp.	9.7	10.25	9.6	10.25	4,894,000
0.065	0.028	ISM Communications Corp.	0.047	0.047	0.046	0.046	46,300,000
29.5	6	Imperial Resources Inc. A	22.25	22.25	22.25	22.25	2,600
0.32	0.04	Island Info and Technology Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.235	0.235	44,970,000
2.08	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.54	65,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.0575	0.06	64,400,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l. Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.38	2.48	1,308,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	116,000
6.8	2.6	Asian Terminals Inc.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.2	75,000
34.5	14	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	33	33	32.5	32.5	101,800
2.16	0.87	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.1	2.16	2.1	2.16	1,250,000
2.04	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.5	1.54	1.48	1.48	71,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.28	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	255,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	4	4	3.9	4	63,000
0.98	0.195	Premiere Entertainment Prod'n Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.71	0.71	780,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.94	0.96	0.94	0.94	380,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	7.5	7.8	7.5	7.8	8,000
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.25	437,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	731,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.5	265,800
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	120,400
		MINING					
0.018	0.0075	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	138,300,000
7.6	3.65	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.6	634,000
7.7	3.65	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.6	606,000
21.25	7.5	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	8,046,400
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	130,000
5	1.76	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	4	4	4	4	34,000
3.1	0.0936	GEOGRACE Res. Philippines Inc.	2.85	2.9	2.8	2.85	87,484,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	3,870,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	2,160,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.03	264,700,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	2,000,000
30	0.88	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	22.75	22.75	22	22.25	608,400
0.024	0.009	Omico Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	409,100,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.9	6	5.8	5.8	17,589,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	500
1.36	0.38	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	1,202,000
1.8	0.52	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.44	8,075,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.51	0.51	12,050,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.024	882,400,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.024	0.027	0.024	0.026	681,900,000
14.25	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.5	10.75	10.5	10.5	302,200
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	625,600,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	988.13	DOWN	8.14	10,987,450	353,275,960
Industrial	5,099.82	DOWN	32.33	228,562,850	767,773,640
Holding Firms	2,235.40	DOWN	18.15	835,315,080	744,415,980
Property	1,836.55	DOWN	11.34	414,465,900	796,360,590
Service	1,620.40	DOWN	15.53	176,710,360	1,076,173,850
Mining & Oil	6,820.40	UP	35.86	3,147,071,500	602,044,920
All Shares Index	2,406.57	DOWN	12.81		
PSEI	3,706.24	DOWN	31.55		
		GRAND TOTALS		4,813,113,140	4,340,044,940

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

SMC allots P35B for power, mining, infra ventures

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SAN MIGUEL CORP., SOUTHEAST Asia's biggest food and beverage firm, is pouring P35 billion (about $750 million) into new businesses in power, mining, infrastructure and utilities, officials said after yesterday's stockholders' meeting.

This represents 10 percent of the company's total assets, San Miguel chief finance officer Ferdinand Constantino said.

San Miguel president Ramon Ang said that at the moment, SMC was interested in investing in transmission assets being sold by the government.

Last year, Ang partnered with Tenaga Nasional Berhad of Malaysia in a consortium that prequalifed for the bidding of the 25-year concession of National Transmission Corp. to operate a nationwide power grid.

"The P35 billion will go a very, very, long way," Ang said.

"We don't have a timetable for that yet (for the P35 billion investment)," Constantino added.

San Miguel chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. expressed confidence that the company's planned ventures into these new engines of growth—mining, power, utilities and infrastructure—would deliver optimum value for shareholders who will reap the benefits of higher earnings for San Miguel.

Cojuangco also told shareholders that San Miguel could even bid for National Power Corp. once it is sold as one big block.

To help fund the company's ambitious expansion into new businesses, shareholders yesterday approved the increase in the company's authorized capital stock from P22.5 billion to P37.5 billion. The new capitalization will be made up of 3.6 billion common class "A" shares, 2.4 billion class "B" shares and 1.5 billion preferred shares, all with a par value of P5 apiece.

The company also obtained shareholder approval to amend its articles of incorporation and pave the way for the issuance of 1.5 billion preferred shares to raise the necessary funds.

Shareholders also approved the transfer of the company's domestic beer assets, excluding land and brands, to a wholly owned subsidiary in exchange for shares of that domestic beer unit for the eventual listing and public offering of such shares.

Constantino said San Miguel's partner Kirin Brewery of Japan was interested to invest in the local brewer. Details of the proposed initial public offer are still being studied.

Megaworld buying ₱1.7-B ELI shares

PROPERTY GIANT MEGAWORLD CORP. IS subscribing to P1.7 billion in preferred shares of Empire East Land Holdings Inc. (ELI).

This will consist of 1.714 billion preferred shares at P1 a share.

INQUIRER sources said the move would raise funds for ELI to retire some debt and finance new projects such as Pioneer Woodlands, a nine-tower, 3,000-unit condominium project, on Pioneer Ave. in Mandaluyong City.

ELI is 45.87-percent owned by Megaworld.

The series "D" preferred shares will be nonvoting, cumulative, nonparticipating, convertible and redeemable and will have preference over common shares in case of liquidation or dissolution of the company.

At the option of the holders, the preferred shares will be convertible in whole or in part to common shares of the issuer on a one-share-for-one-share basis anytime after issue date.

All series "D" preferred shares outstanding as of the annual anniversary date of issuance will be entitled to dividends at the rate of 4.5 percent a year.

ELI plans to spend roughly P8 billion over the next five years mostly to build condominiums catering to the middle income earners.

Company president Anthony Charlemagne Yu had said that the five-year budget plan translated to about P1.5 billion a year to be churned out largely from internally generated funds.

Yu said that for this year alone, Empire East would start pre-selling two condominium projects, with the units priced at P1 million to P3 million each.

"We believe that the activity in this (middle-income) market validates our view that it is a stable market," Yu said.

The two condominium projects that will be pre-sold this year are Pioneer Woodlands and Little Baguio Terraces in Greenhills, San Juan.

Little Baguio will offer 2,000 units. A typical ELI condominium unit is 22.5 to 80 square meters each. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

CURRENCIES

July 24, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.724323	1.000000	44.9240
Japan	Yen	0.005983	0.008260	0.3711
United Kingdom	Pound	1.491308	2.058900	92.4940
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.092610	0.127858	5.7439
Switzerland	Franc	0.600450	0.828981	37.2411
Canada	Dollar	0.691940	0.955292	42.9155
Singapore	Dollar	0.480416	0.663262	29.7964
Australia	Dollar	0.639861	0.883392	39.6855
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.921484	2.652801	119.1744
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.193142	0.266652	11.9791
Brunei	Dollar	0.478828	0.661070	29.6979
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000080	0.000110	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.024721	0.034130	1.5333
Uae	Dirham	0.197229	0.272294	12.2325
Eu	Euro	1.000000	1.380600	62.0221
Korea	Won	0.000792	0.001093	0.0491
China	Yuan**	0.095784	0.132240	5.9407
Argentina	Peso	0.231969	0.320256	14.3872
Brazil	Real	0.393354	0.543065	24.3967
Denmark	Kroner	0.134425	0.185587	8.3373
India	Rupee	0.018054	0.024925	1.1197
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212598	0.293513	13.1858
Mexico	New Peso	0.067300	0.092915	4.1741
New Zealand	Dollar	0.581645	0.803019	36.0748
Norway	Kroner	0.126475	0.174611	7.8442
Pakistan	Rupee	0.011996	0.016562	0.7440
South Africa	Rand	0.106474	0.146998	6.6037
Sweden	Kroner	0.108917	0.150371	6.7553
Syria	Pound	0.014016	0.019350	0.8693
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022083	0.030488	1.3696
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000338	0.000466	0.0209

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—July 23, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of July 23, 2007

Stocks end lower on Fitch report

SHARE PRICES closed 0.8-percent lower yesterday as President Macapagal-Arroyo's disappointing State of the Nation Address failed to boost investor sentiment, dealers said.

Comments from Fitch Ratings that the government was unlikely to keep its budget deficit for 2007 within the P63-billion ceiling also weighed on the market, they said.

The composite index lost 31.55 points at 3,706.24. The broader all-share index lost 12.81 points to 2,406.57.

Losers led gains 61 to 40 with 70 stocks unchanged.

Volume was 4.8 billion shares worth P4.3 billion.

"Investors were trying to figure out if the President's flagship infrastructure projects are realistic while Fitch's statement brought out concerns as to how government will go about funding these (projects)," said Ron Rodrigo of Unicapital Securities.

Fitch said that based on the first-half fiscal data, it now expected the Philippines' budget deficit for 2007 to hit P125 billion or 1.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), excluding revenue from planned asset sales in the second half.

"Fitch's statement implies there will be more pressure to increase interest rates or for the government to borrow more to cover its deficit," said Rodrigo.

"There might be a shift of funds from equities to fixed-income instruments, which will become more attractive in terms of yields," he said. *AFP*

PSALM POWER SECTOR ASSETS & LIABILITIES MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

INVITATION TO EXPRESS INTEREST, PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation *("PSALM")* Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee (the *"Committee"*), in accordance with Section 21 of RA 9136, the "Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001" (the *"EPIRA"*), invites interested parties to participate in, pre-qualify and bid for the:

Privatization By Way of Concession Of The Facilities and Assets of the National Transmission Corporation

(the *"Transco Privatization"*). The Transco Privatization is through open competitive bidding.

Interested parties are required to submit an Expression of Interest ("EOI") to PSALM which shall state the full name, address, telephone and fax number of each interested party, name of the principal contact and signed by an authorized representative of each interested party. All EOIs must be received by PSALM at the PSALM Office, 7th Floor Bankmer Building 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, not later than 5:00 p.m. on 24 August, 2007 (the *"EOI Submission Deadline"*). Only interested parties that submit an EOI by the EOI Submission Deadline shall be allowed to participate further in the Transco Privatization. A party may express interest in behalf of another party, provided that it will state that it is acting in behalf of another party. The identity of the actual party must be disclosed no later than the submission of the Pre-qualification Proposal.

As a prerequisite to the (i) receipt of the bidding package (the *"Bidding Package"*) that includes the procedures for bidding for the Transco Privatization (the *"Bidding Procedures"*), (ii) the draft transaction documents, (iii) conduct of due diligence, and (iv) submission of a pre-qualification proposal, interested parties must execute a Confidentiality Agreement and an Undertaking pursuant to Section 78 of the EPIRA, in the forms provided by PSALM, and pay a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Thousand U.S. Dollars (U.S. $5,000.000) (the *"Participation Fee"*). The Participation Fee shall either be in cash, manager's check or cashier's check. All bank charges, if any, shall be for the account of the interested party. The Bidding Package shall be issued during office hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) from 01 August 2007 until the Pre-qualification Proposal Submission Deadline (indicated below).

Among the bidding activities are: Due Diligence to commence on 01 August 2007; Pre-qualification Proposal Submission Deadline of 5:00 p.m. on 21 September 2007; Pre-bid Conference at 2:00 p.m. on 05 November 2007 at the PSALM Office; and Deadline for Receipt of Bids by PSALM at 10:00 a.m. on 12 December 2007. References to dates and times shall be based on Manila time, unless otherwise stated, all venues shall be at the PSALM office. Should any of the above dates fall on a public holiday in Makati City, the deadline shall be extended to the same time of the immediately succeeding business day in Makati City. The dates and times of other important milestones are contained in the Bidding Procedures.

Interested parties and consortia should note that EPIRA provides that the Concessionaire "shall be financially and technically capable, with proven domestic and/or international experience and expertise as a leading transmission system operator and that such experience must be with a transmission system of comparable capacity and coverage as the Philippines". The detailed pre-qualification criteria are contained in the Bidding Procedures. Only parties who have pre-qualified will be allowed to attend the Pre-bid Conference, and submit a technical proposal and a financial bid for the Transco Privatization, as outlined in the Bidding Procedures. Pre-qualified bidders will be required to post a Thirty Million U.S. Dollar (U.S.$ 30,000,000.00) bid bond in the form of an irrevocable confirmed standby letter of credit together with the submission of Bids. The amount and other details of the bid bond are contained in the Bidding Procedures. The bid bond of the winning bidder shall be substituted by a performance security in accordance with the transaction documents to guarantee prompt, faithful and complete performance of its obligations under the transaction documents. A two-envelope bidding system will be adopted. Other details of the Transco Privatization, including the submission of audited financial statements and income tax return, the deadline for the formation of consortia and other deadlines, are contained in the Bidding Procedures. The terms of the concession are contained in the draft transaction documents and shall be finalized in accordance with the Bidding Procedures.

Expressions of Interest, Confidentiality Agreements and Undertakings shall be addressed and submitted to: The Chairman, Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee, PSALM Corporation, 7th Floor Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines. Inquiries and clarifications shall be addressed to Mr. Froilan A. Tampinco at the PSALM Office or at tele/fax (632) 892-6029 or e-mail address fatampinco@psalm.gov.ph.

The Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any interested party, consortia or bidder or proposals or bids therefrom, or any part thereof, and/or to waive any defects contained therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines in accordance with the Bidding Procedures. The Committee reserves the right to modify, supplement, change, suspend or terminate the privatization process at any time, including the Bidding Procedures, schedule and the venue provided therein, for any reason whatsoever and without giving prior notice. Interested parties and/or bidders will be notified subsequently of such modifications, supplements, or changes.

(Sgd.) **RAPHAEL PERPETUO M. LOTILLA**
Chairman
PSALM Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–July 23, 24 & 25, 2007)

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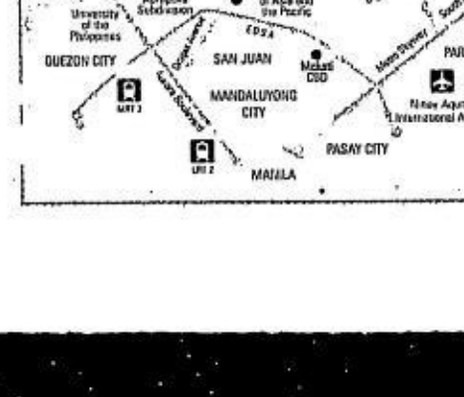

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Proving low-cost cars sometimes equates with value

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

THE NEWS WAS, OF COURSE, MOST UNWELcome. Prior to Chery Automobile's maiden launch here in the Philippines last week, the airwaves and print media were swamped with not so good reports on Chinese-made products.

THE QQ3 has been popular with the youth and first-time auto buyers (mostly women buyers) in China and Iseway Motors is expecting a similar trend here.

THIS 1.6-liter Tiggo SUV is powered by a gasoline engine that complies with Euro IV emission standards.

First, it was the recall of toothpastes made in China that were found to contain diethylene glycol, a chemical commonly used in antifreeze and brake fluid. Afterward, it was the order to pull out a candy product that tested positive for formaldehyde (formalin), an embalming chemical used in funeral parlors.

Indeed, the "Made in China" label is getting a bad rap, in light of all the recent and regular reports of fake, shoddy or dangerous goods.

"But this doesn't mean that every product that comes from China should be regarded as such. In fact, various industry sectors in China are getting up to international standards. Among these are in the auto sector where Chery is one of the leaders and we are here to prove how far Chinese-built cars have come," announced Ricky Lam, CEO of Iseway Motors Philippines, the exclusive distributor of Chery in the country.

Most successful

Chery is one of the most successful car manufacturers in China. Unlike many of its counterparts that created joint ventures with foreign companies to obtain technology, Chery relied on its own research and development.

PROVING/ B2-2

MOTOLITE GOLD 21

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LANCER box type

LANCER EVO

Old school craving

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

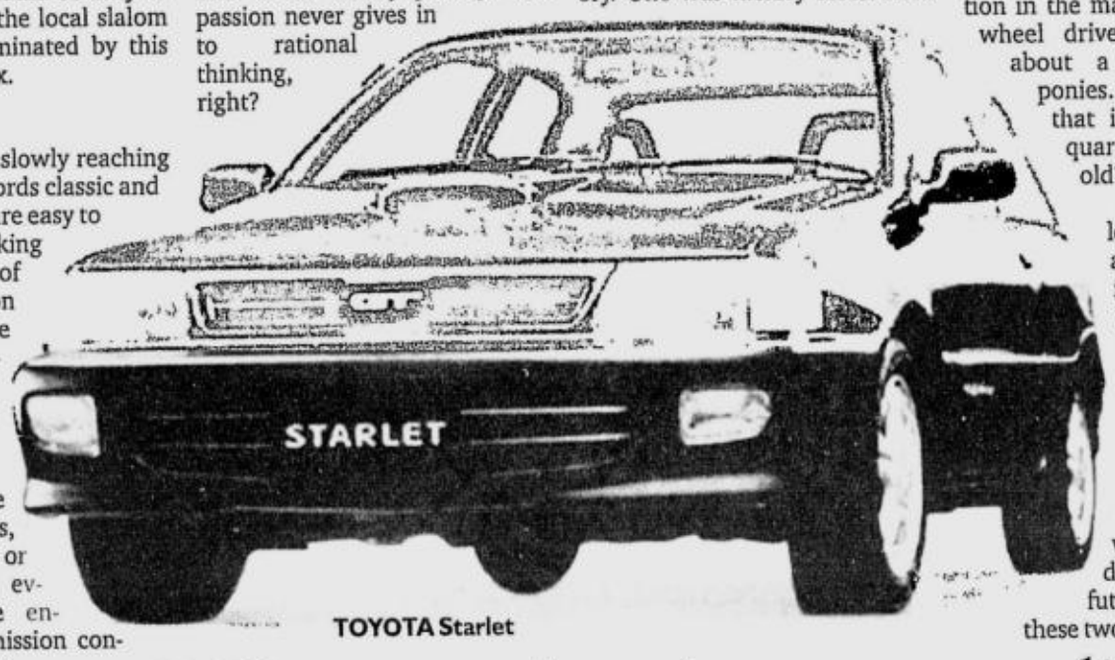
REMINISCING ABOUT CARS from the past is always great for perspective. Seeing them in the actual sheet metal, chugging along a stretch of road is often times a spiritual experience. How can something so old still be in decent running condition? Thinking of the time and effort that keeps these cars cranking often adds to the mystique. Let's not even talk about where to get parts. Whether as rolling history lessons or just clear examples of passion and ingenuity, old school cars clearly demand a lot of respect.

One car that has always held my fascination is the KP61 Toyota Starlet, an old warhorse in local motor sports campaigns. Small, light and blessed with a short wheelbase combined with rear-wheel drive, it should be easy to understand why the local slalom scene is still dominated by this unlikely econobox.

Classic

With numbers slowly reaching extinction, the words classic and hard to come by are easy to utter when speaking of the KP61. Part of the fascination comes with the sheer individuality of most of the Starlets that I've seen over the years. From the signature TRD flares, whether real or knocked-off, to every conceivable engine and transmission configuration, quite possibly in this day and age no two local KP61s are exactly alike. Immaculate, bone stock two doors are as rare as flesh and bone Tamaraw's these days lending an air of occasion to rare sightings.

Equally special are the Frankenstein slalom racers, put together from all segments of the Toyota parts bin—as well as other marquees. One monster Starlet's crew chief even claimed that his ward's cut and sewn engine needed to use a Porsche 911 timing belt. Sheer lunacy perhaps but passion never gives in to rational thinking, right?



TOYOTA Starlet

Box type

Another icon from my white polo and khaki shorts days is the second-generation Mitsubishi Lancer, the beloved "box type" in the local car vernacular. While not as ready to rip road and track as the small Toyota, the popularity of this car probably had something to do with the fact that there was a time the market was starved for any other choice. Imagine that, at some point in Philippine history, saying you had a brand-new car in your garage automatically meant you had bought a box type—and only a box type.

These cars can still be seen plying our roads but again the sightings are getting fewer and far between. Suffice it to say, my last encounters with spick and span examples are still etched in memory. One was factory stock from the '80s and left unused in someone's garage with the reason behind this virtual automotive time capsule escaping me altogether. For further reasons difficult to comprehend, the car was then sacrificed to the gods of Motorsport. Gutted and caged, the next time this Lancer was sighted was at an autocross, happily dodging cones in its new life as a racer.

One hot sedan

Also adding fuel to the old school fire is a factor turbocharged version in what looks like scotia white. Officially known as the Lancer 2000 Turbo, at some point this was likely the one hot sedan. Closer inspection of this gem of an old school ride even showed factory-installed chassis stiffeners and anti-roll bars. Definitely shades of Evolution in the making, sans the all-wheel drive and only short about a hundred or so ponies. How impressive is that in a car that is a quarter of a century old?

Old school rides allow us to look back and appreciate how far we've come along. Driving one of these cars gives us a snapshot of the past. Often times their impact on our motoring society is indelible. How we, Filipinos, drive and what we choose to drive, now and in the future, owe much to these two automobiles.

Gov't loses P2B on spurious insurance policies

THE GOVERNMENT LOSES P400 million a year or approximately P2 billion since the year 2000 in taxes due to the proliferation of fake or spurious Insurance Commission (IC) certificates of compliance (COC).

This was revealed by documents obtained from the Insurance Commission and the Land Transportation Office which show that the statistics of registered vehicles as against the IC-COC issued do not tally.

Since the year 2000, the discrepancies between the statistics of the Insurance Commission and the LTO are monumental. For the period 2000-2005, a total of 25,900,000 vehicles were registered while the total COC issued by the Insurance Commission was only 8,700,000, leaving a difference of 17,200,000 motor vehicles without legitimately reported COC.

Revenue losses

The revenues lost by the government on uncollected documentary stamp taxes alone amount to a little more than P1 billion while the loses due to uncollected VAT relates to a peso value of another 1 billion for a total of P2 billion lost since the year 2000. Records for 2006 and partial statistics of 2007 indicate that the inconsistencies on motor vehicles registered and COC issued are still immense.

The Insurance Commission and the LTO had identified the current authentication and verification process of IC-COC as the reason behind the immense inconsistency. The current system does not have an online and real-time connection with the LTO IT network which is essential in keeping the integrity of the insurance data and nor is the system fully automated . The vulnerability of the system to human intervention compromises the integrity of the authentication process.

Transportation and Communications Secretary Larry Mendoza, however, said that effective July 25, the clearing house for the authentication and verification of Comprehensive Third Party Liability (CTPL) policies would be operated by Stradcom Corp., the LTO's information technology provider.

FOTON'S Blizzard pickup combines good looks with exhilarating performance—in a budget-friendly package.

China's top truck maker now in RP

THE NO. 1 MANUFACTURER of trucks and pickups in China is now in the Philippines.

Beiqi Foton Ltd., or Foton for short, recently inaugurated its showroom in Quezon City and now offers its best-selling trucks and pickups at very affordable prices.

Rommel Sytin, president of United Asia Automotive Group Inc., Foton's partner and official distributor in the Philippines, said Filipino truck buyers can now visit their showroom at A. Bonifacio Avenue and see for themselves the ultra-reliable Foton vehicles that boast of high-end looks and features yet easy-on-the pocket sticker prices and maintenance costs.

"After months of negotiations, Foton is finally in the Philippines through its partner, UAAGI. It is an honor to bring such quality vehicles that fit the requirements of our small and medium enterprises," Sytin said.

Leading truck maker

The Beijing-based Foton is the leading manufacturer of light trucks and utility pickups in China. Established only a decade ago, this fast-growing company now exports to more than 30 countries, including the United States and Japan.

For the excellent quality of its vehicles, Foton has been eyed as a worthy investment partner by German-American company DaimlerChrysler AG. It is currently working with American company Cummins on its environment-friendly diesel engines.

In its entry to the Philippines, Foton has brought in a lineup of workhorses, starting with its compact pickup called the Blizzard, known in China as SUP. Modern in looks and performance, this pickup is now available for a mere P588,000, or about 30 percent cheaper than other brands.

Other vehicles

Other vehicles now available at Foton's showroom are the following:

- **Tornado** is a four-wheel, 2-ton truck that is available as a drop-side or with an MPV (multipurpose vehicle) body that can comfortably seat 23 people. It is perfect as a business hauler or a school service. As a business hauler, it can do the work of a 6-wheeler while running only on four wheels, thereby exempting it from the truck ban.

A Tornado cab-and-chassis unit only costs P599,000 while a complete MPV unit with dual aircon only costs P789,000 or cab and chassis for only P599,000.

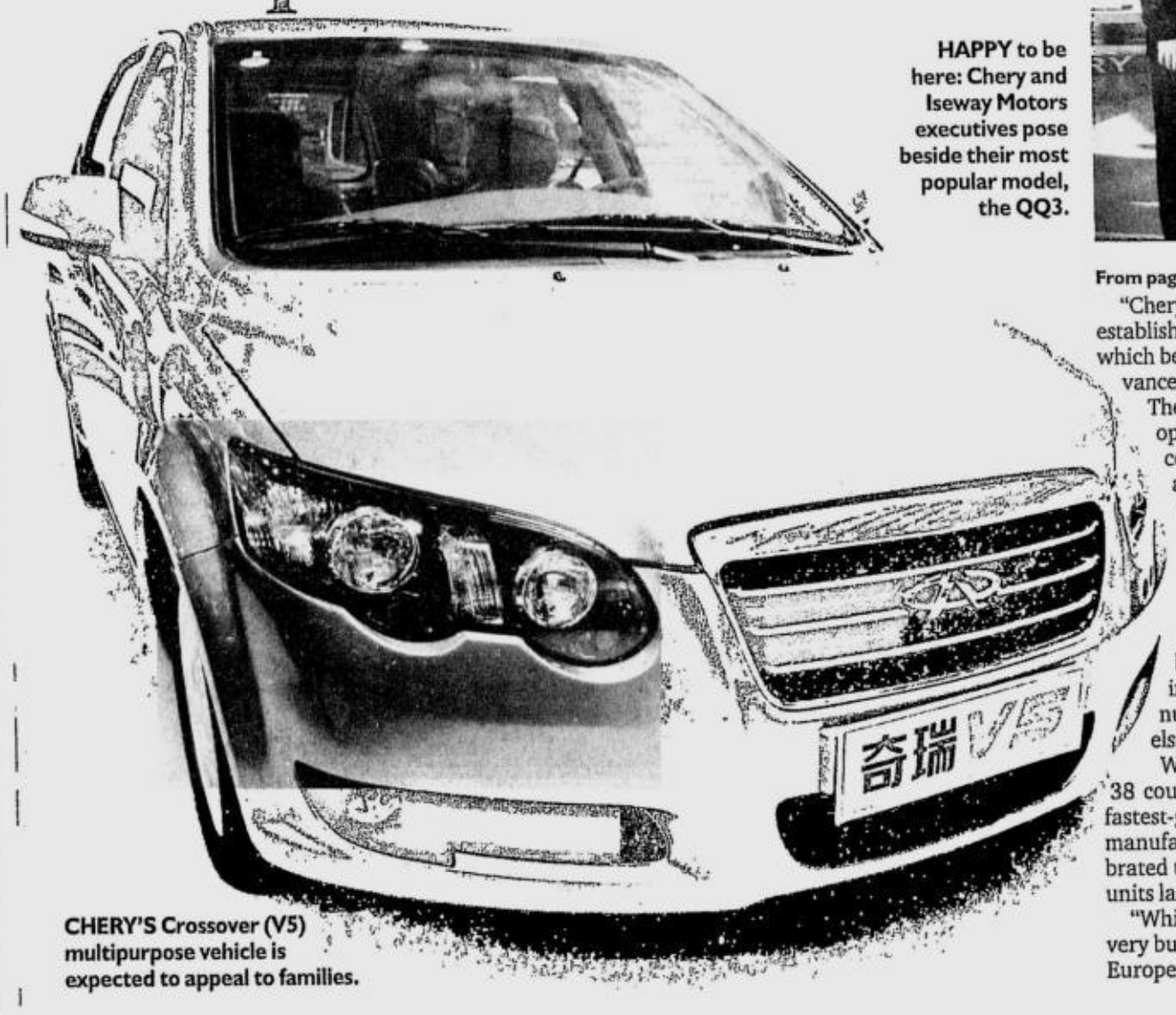
- **Cyclone** is a 6-wheeler that fits every businessman's budget. At only P485,000 for the cab and chassis, business owners can now have their brand-new truck and save on maintenance costs and lost opportunities brought about by untimely breakdowns.
- **Hurricane** is a megatruck that can rival Optimus Prime and can be used to haul anything, as in anything. Despite its gigantic size, it remains within the reach of medium-size businesses. A cab-and-chassis unit retails for P1,400,000.

Sytin noted that all Foton vehicles enjoy a standard factory warranty on both parts and service. He is inviting entrepreneurs in the provinces to be sales agents and serve as virtual provincial dealers. "They don't need millions to become dealers of Foton. The returns are high and the products are very easy to sell," he said.

For more information, visit United Asia Automotive Group at 707 A. Bonifacio Ave., Quezon City or call (02) 363-9367 or (02) 364-7320.

Proving low-cost cars sometimes equates with value

HAPPY to be here: Chery and Iseway Motors executives pose beside their most popular model, the QQ3.



CHERY'S Crossover (V5) multipurpose vehicle is expected to appeal to families.

From page B2-1

"Chery invested $50 million to establish a technical academy, which became one of the most advanced R&D centers in China. The company, however, cooperated with an Austrian company (AVL) to develop an engine, 5,000 of which were later exported to the United States. German company Bosch is also helping Chery design its transmissions as well as Italian firms Ferrari, Lamborghini, Bertone and Pininfarina in designing a number of Chery's car models," Lam shared.

With the brand now sold in 38 countries, Chery became the fastest-growing passenger-car manufacturer in China and celebrated the production of 600,000 units last year.

"While the company has been very busy making headway in the European and United States market, Iseway Motors was quite fortunate to convince Chery to also consider the Philippines. We believe their products would appeal very much to Filipino car buyers who consider affordability and quality workmanship in equal terms," said Iseway Motors president Raymond Tumao.

Chery banner

Carrying the Chery banner here in the Philippines is the QQ3, the company's compact hatch model powered by either an 800-cc or 1.1-liter gasoline engine (paired to either manual or automated manual transmission).

"This car, winner of the prestigious JD Power Asia Pacific 2004 China Initial Quality Study in the compact car segment is already being exported to the Middle East and Latin America. With a price of just P319,000 for the base model, QQ3 is already equipped with an antilock brake systems, dual front airbags, power windows and a Euro III compliant engine, which is, way above the Philippine emission requirement," Tumao said.

Aside from the QQ3, Iseway also unveiled other Chery models, namely: the P858,000 Crossover (V5), a 2.0-liter, seven-seater multipurpose vehicle; P479,000 Cowin sedan, which is powered by an LPG/gasoline dual-fuel engine that AVL helped developed; P728,00 Tiggo, a 1.6-liter sport utility vehicle; and the P589,000 A5, a 1.6-liter executive sedan.

Tumao said Iseway Motors could even lower the prices quoted here as the company is deeply committed to providing an economical way of transportation and customer satisfaction.

"We want to prove that low cost does sometimes equate with value and even the Chinese government is very supportive in Iseway Motors' desire to make their Chery cars very affordable as well as popular here in the Philippines," Tumao said.

Filipinos more meticulous than others, says Isuzu prexy

By Tessa R. Salazar

YOU JUST CAN'T make a Filipino part with his or her hard-earned money that easily.

That's the initial impression Isuzu Philippines Corp.'s new president Keiji Takeda has of Filipino car buyers.

Barely three months into his new job, Takeda noted that buyers here were more meticulous than their foreign counterparts.

Simply harder to please

Takeda said Filipinos were simply harder to please. He added that nearly every aspect of the vehicle would be scrutinized, from performance, to style, to the mileage capabilities.

This Filipino trait, however, makes Takeda even more proud of IPC's recent achievement. It rolled out July 18 its 100,000th unit from its assembly line in Biñan, Laguna.

On its 10th year of operations in the Philippines, IPC has also proven its mettle in a Philippine automotive market where almost no holds are barred.

"Neighboring countries experience importation problems or have government regulations, limiting the number of models. But in the Philippines, any brand can go into the market, so competition is so tight," Takeda quipped during the landmark rollout.

Takeda, however, was mum when pressed for any direct comparison between the Philippines and any other Southeast Asian nation.

He was managing director of Isuzu Singapore for four years prior to becoming IPC president. He graduated from Osaka University of Foreign Studies.

100,000th unit

The 100,000th unit was an Isuzu N-Series light-duty truck (NHR)—the same model the local motoring media used in a fuel consumption competition at the Batangas Racing Circuit a few months ago.

The production breakdown in IPC's 10 years of operation has been: 58,708 AUVs (Crosswind and Hi-Lander), 22,283 pickups (D-Max and Fuego), 7,878 SUVs (Alterra and Trooper), 9,688 N-Series trucks and 1,443 F-Series trucks and buses.

ISUZU N-Series light-duty truck: Isuzu Philippines' 100,000th unit

ASIA PACIFIC RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Hat trick for Crocker and Motor Image Rally Team

SCORING HIS THIRD STRAIGHT win in a row, FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship defending champion Cody Crocker once again proved his mettle, this time on the narrow and gravelly roads of Hokkaido's mountains. Driving the Motor Image Subaru Impreza WRX STI made in Singapore, and supported by the Motor Image Rally Team, the Australian's winning time was 2 hours, 32 minutes and 13 seconds.

It was a dominating drive by Crocker the reigning APRC champion, taking 10 points for the win and an additional six bonus points for finishing each day as the fastest car as well. The multiple Australian champ now sits on top of the series table with the maximum 48 points.

Fantastic result

"It's a fantastic result. Hokkaido is one of the more challenging courses in the championship and we were up against fierce competition from the Japanese guys like Katsu Taguchi, so it's a pretty exciting win for us. We've still got three events left, so our goal is to win each of those as well," 35-year-old Crocker said.

"I want to congratulate both my drivers, Cody and Rifat for a great showing. The point is to be careful and get as many points as we can get. Hokkaido is known to be a very tough rally so coming in first is a real coup for the whole Motor Image Rally Team. This is our first year and there's a lot to learn but we've assembled a great team—drivers, cars and engineers, and the results are showing," said Glenn Tan, group chief executive, Motor Image Group.

Indonesian driver Rifat Sungkar, 29, who is also backed by the Motor Image Rally Team, came in 6th with a time of 2 hours, 41 minutes and 39 seconds. This is Sungkar's first year driving a Subaru. "It wasn't an easy weekend for me but I am gaining more experience with every leg and getting more familiar with the car. So I think what's important for me now is to stay focused on doing my best and staying safe. We still have Malaysia, Indonesia and China to go and I'm looking forward to them," Sungkar said.

Pos	Driver	Country	Vehicle	Class	Time
1	Cody Crocker	Australia	Subaru	N4	2:32:13.0
2	Katsuhiko Taguchi	Japan	Mitsubishi	N4	2:33:36.6
3	Jussi Valimaki	Finland	Mitsubishi	N4	2:34:12.6
4	Hiroshi Yanagisawa	Japan	Subaru	N4	2:37:07.1
5	V-R Naren Kumar	India	Mitsubishi	N4	2:38:51.2
6	Rifat Sungkar	Indonesia	Subaru	N4	2:41:39.6
7	Yoshio Ikemachi	Japan	Subaru	N4	2:46:21.6
8	Brian Green	New Zealand	Mitsubishi	N4	2:48:17.7

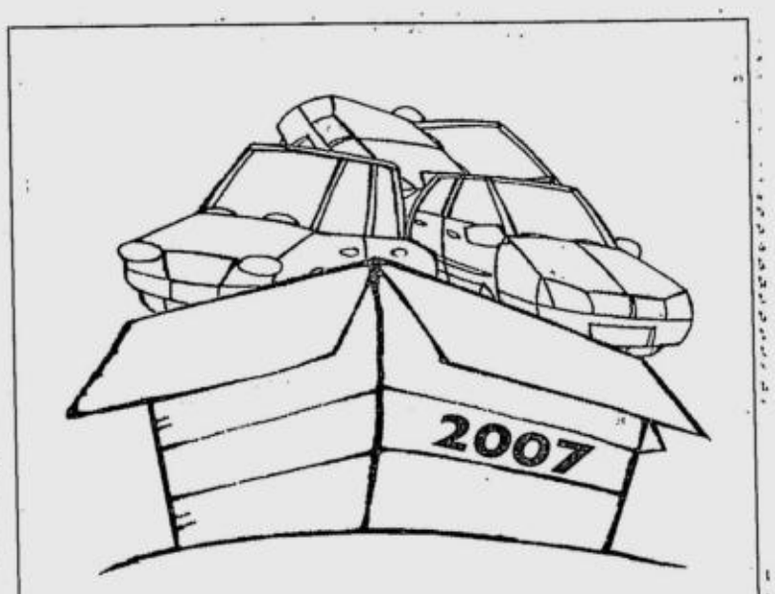
2007 Rally of Hokkaido Final Results

STANDING on top of the car is victorious Motor Image team driver Cody Cocker. Also shown in the middle is Glen Tan, Group chief executive of Motor Image Enterprises. Joining them is Tan Eng Soon, chair of Tan Chong International, parent company of Motor Image.

4th round

Comprising 16 stages and a total of 232.42 km, the Rally of Hokkaido is the fourth round of the seven-leg FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship. With chilling winds overhead, the rally kick-started with a ceremonial flag-off and fireworks display on July 6 in the city of Obihiro on Hokkaido, which is the northernmost island of the Japanese Archipelago. As always the event was supported by a large number of local fans waiting by the road, waving flags and taking photos.

In all, a total of eight teams competed in the APRC Rally of Hokkaido. The Motor Image-backed teams driving made-in-Singapore Subaru Group N Rally cars were fronted by Cody Crocker, from Australia and Rifat Sungkar from Indonesia. Both teams made their debut in the Rally of Whangerei, held from May 11 to 13 in New Zealand. The next event in the APRC is the Malaysia Rally, to be held on Aug. 10-12 and on the Palm Oil Plantation roads in Johor Bahru, very near to Singapore.



Big plans for Car of the Year 2007

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

NOW ON ITS FOURTH YEAR of managing the annual Car of the Year Philippines (Coty-P), the Car Awards Group Inc. (Cagi) has big plans for this year's awards season.

Cagi is a nonstock, nonprofit organization independent of the automotive industry. Founded in 2004 to acclaim the most outstanding new car each year, it consists of over 30 motoring journalists representing more than a dozen print, broadcast and cyber media outlets.

At Cagi's general membership meeting last Friday, Cagi 2007-2008 president Ira Panganiban, concurrently the dzXL-RMN Manila station manager and a Business Mirror motoring writer, announced that Coty 2007 kicks off on Aug. 2 with a Manufacturers/Media Launch at the Rockwell Club in Makati to inform everyone about the new Coty rules, test procedures and guidelines, categories and Special Awards.

Revised categories

After a meeting with the Chamber of Automobile Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) last month, Cagi revised the motor vehicle categories as follows: 1) Cars, subdivided into Subcompact (basic, executive and luxury), Compact, and Midsize (sport, executive, luxury and ultra luxury; 2) Wagons and Crossovers (2WD, AWD, luxury and ultra luxury); 3) Vans and Multipurpose Vehicles (compact, midsize and luxury); 4) Pickup Trucks (2WD and 4WD); 5) Sport Utility Vehicles (compact, midsize and luxury.)

All production vehicles launched in the Philippines this year are eligible to enter the 2007 Coty-P testfests that will be conducted at the San Lazaro Park's sprawling grounds near Southwoods, Laguna. Manila Jockey Club veep Bal Fonacier is showing his support of Coty-P by reserving an area where Cagi can pitch a tent and park the vehicles to be tested every Saturday starting Aug. 25 and ending Oct. 20. Breakfast, lunch and dinner at the clubhouse will be offered free to Cagi members who attend the testfests.

Starting this year, the car manufacturers will be requested to deliver their entries to the test venue on the Saturday marked for the category under which each entry falls. In the past, the entries were picked up by Cagi members who drove them to the test venue. With this new procedure, the manufacturers are given ample time to prepare their entries well for Cagi's quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the design, comfort, safety, handling, performance, drive satisfaction, technological innovation and value for money of each entry.

Public launch

On Aug. 15, the Saturday before the nine weekend testfests begin, Cagi will host a street party at Rockwell as the Public Launch of the 2007 Coty-P Awards. "There will be a display of last year's Coty winners plus a live band and food and drinks for all our guests," Ira promises.

The 2007 Coty-P season concludes with the proclamation of the best-in-class winners, the Special Awards winners and the 2007 Car of the Year at Awards Night on Nov. 15 at the Rockwell Tent in Makati. This is a formal event in which Coty-P sponsors participate as presenters of the Coty trophies and get to display their merchandising materials (but not sell their products). From the start, to avoid any conflict of interest, Cagi has not accepted or solicited financial support from car manufacturers, distributors and dealers. Neither does Cagi charge car manufacturers an entry fee for participation in Coty-P. Cagi does charge Coty-P winners a royalty for the use of the Coty-P logo in their advertising and promo materials.

To cap the 2007 season, Cagi plans to air a TV special featuring the Coty-P highlights. This is tentatively scheduled for Dec. 16 on Studio 23

Accreditation

Meanwhile, the National Press Club headed by Roy Mabasa has accredited Cagi as a motoring beat association. The 2007-2008 CAGI board of directors was inducted into office last July 12 at Malacañang by President Macapagal-Arroyo. Aside from Ira Panganiban as president, the Cagi board consists of Ferman Lao, technical editor of Top Gear as internal vice president; Andy Sevilla, motoring columnist of Business Mirror as external vice president; Robby Consunji, off-road editor of Top Gear as secretary; and Jeff Reyes, advertising executive of The Philippine Star, as treasurer.

Dino Directo, motoring reporter of Manila Standard Today, acts as public relations officer while Gadgets Magazine editor in chief Armin Amio as founding president, Speed Magazine editor in chief Manny de los Reyes as 2005-2006 president and this columnist as 2006-2007 president, form the Council of Advisers. The Cagi board meets every Monday at Segafredo Zanetti Café in Greenhills whose proprietor, Erwin Versoza, is one of the early sponsors of Coty-P 2007.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: It's a miracle that curiosity survives formal education.

Sports car with low fuel consumption

PRESENTING THE NEW 911 GT2 at the Frankfurt Motor Show, Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG, Stuttgart, is proudly launching the most powerful 911 so far homologated for road use. Through its striking design with large air intakes at the front and the rear wing so characteristic of this very special model, the new 911 GT2 expresses the power and performance potential of the fastest-ever 911 right from the start even at a standstill.

Available exclusively with rear-wheel drive and a manual six-speed gearbox, this high-performance athlete accelerates to 100 kph in just 3.7 seconds and reaches a top speed of 329 kph (204 mph) on average fuel consumption of just 12.5 liters/100 km (equal to 22.6 mpg imp) in the New European Driving Cycle (NEDC), thus offering a level of fuel economy regarded as quite impossible in this performance class just a few years ago.

The 3.6-liter boxer engine achieves its maximum output of 530 bhp (390 kW) at 6,500 rpm, with maximum torque of 680 Newton-meters (501 lb-ft) maintained consistently between 2,200 and 4,500 rpm. With its unladen weight of 1,440 kg or 3,175 lb, finally, the 911 GT2 offers a power-to-weight ratio of just 2.72 kg/6 lb per horsepower.

Petron garners Marketing Communications Awards

PETRON CORP. GARNERED FOUR silver trophies at the 2nd Integrated Marketing Communications Effectiveness Awards (Imcea), held recently at the University of Asia and the Pacific in Pasig City.

Confirming its tradition of excellence in marketing communications, the country's top oil firm won the following awards.

Petron Xtra Unleaded earned citations in two categories: Best New Product Brand Introduction, and Best Innovative and Integrated Media Campaign. The awards recognized the record-setting run of racing legend Pocholo Ramirez, who was able to travel 1,114-kilometers on one full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded—a feat which introduced the new fuel formulation and also became the basis of the brand's media campaign.

Second challenge

Because of the success of the first run, Petron held a second challenge with all featured teams beating the original mark set by Ramirez. Team Zayco Hermanos finally ran out of fuel at the 1,400-kilometer mark after traversing the entire length of Luzon, from Ilocos Norte to Camarines Sur.

The astonishing achievement created a buzz in the market. More people tried the product just to see if the claims were true. This also created strong awareness on the need to be more discerning in the consumer's fuel choice and driving habits.

ArtPetron was awarded Best Established Service Brand. Now on its 7th year, the highly successful and multiawarded ArtPetron program has become a venue for young Filipino artists to showcase their talent and creativity while giving tribute to the country's rich traditions and national heritage.

A feat in itself

The competition has encouraged the youth to research about subjects involving the given year's theme, examples of which are Filipino games and landmarks, that have either been long forgotten or taken for granted. Winning ArtPetron is a feat in itself. Exposure is given via Petron's calendars and other collaterals featuring winning works made by these aspiring artists. The competition has jumpstarted the careers of previously unknown artists who are now known members of the art scene.

Recognized as Best Integrated Internal Marketing Program, Petron's An Hour with the Champion is a lecture series by eminent business leaders to communicate the company's core values and impart stories of excellence to employees.

The Imcea, given every two years, recognizes communications campaigns that have achieved both business and marketing objectives while promoting societal values. It is organized by the University and Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) in partnership with BusinessWorld, Marketing and Opinion Research Society of the Philippines (MORES), and leading industry professionals in marketing and advertising.

MAX space for up to seven occupants. The new X5 has large interior, optional third row seats and run flat tires as standard.

THE BMW XPO

Bikes share limelight with sedans, SUVs

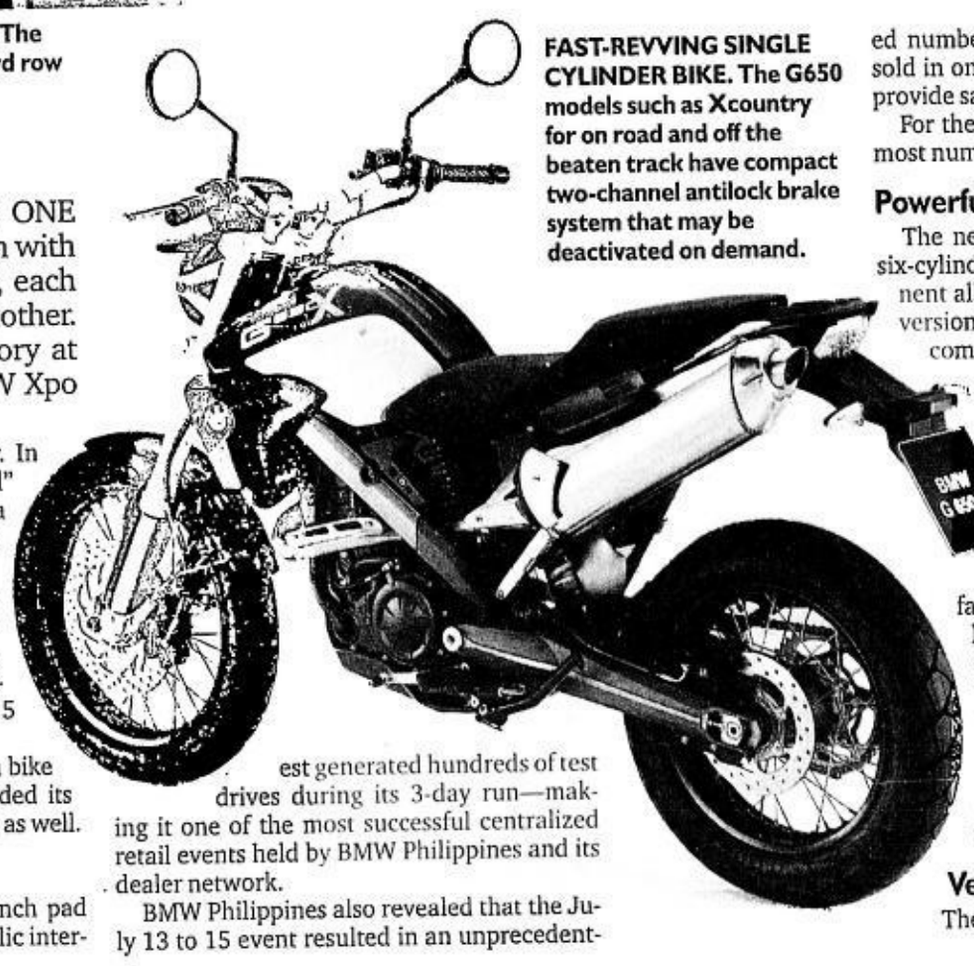
By Tessa R. Salazar

PUT SUPERMODELS IN ONE room. Chances are, even with one's stupendous looks, each will tend to upstage one another. And that seemed to be the story at the recent "Evolutions: A BMW Xpo Event" at the Fort.

And that's not a bad thing, either. In this event, even the "evolutionized" Bimmer four-wheelers were given a run for their money by the sexy-but-brutish BMW bikes.

Visitors couldn't help but admire the new BMW G650 X lines of the Motorrad—the Moto and the Country—even if the show space was mostly taken up by the redesigned 1 and 5 series and the new X5.

Even a fully loaded BMW mountain bike (priced at over P130,000) was provided its own space, and caught some attention as well.



FAST-REVVING SINGLE CYLINDER BIKE. The G650 models such as Xcountry for on road and off the beaten track have compact two-channel antilock brake system that may be deactivated on demand.

Launch pad

The BMW Expo served as the launch pad for the latest BMW products, and public interest generated hundreds of test drives during its 3-day run—making it one of the most successful centralized retail events held by BMW Philippines and its dealer network.

BMW Philippines also revealed that the July 13 to 15 event resulted in an unprecedented number of brand-new BMW motorcycles sold in one weekend. However, it declined to provide sales figures.

For the 4-wheeled set, the new X5 had the most number of inquiries and test drives.

Powerful engines

The new X5 features powerful eight- and six-cylinder engines and its xDrive permanent all wheel drive, enhanced in its newer version to an even higher standard. It also comes with a brand-new suspension optimized from the ground up gives the new model better agility and driving dynamics.

For the younger set of Bimmer car aficionados, 1 Series had also undergone modifications in its front and rear, for a more powerful look. It retains its impressive face, except for a redesigned and enlarged BMW kidney grille and newly contoured headlight surrounds in the bumper unit, darker surrounds on the lights, a wider air intake in the lower section of the front air dam, a more pronounced spoiler lip and a new trim bar, and standard fog lamps with the more striking look.

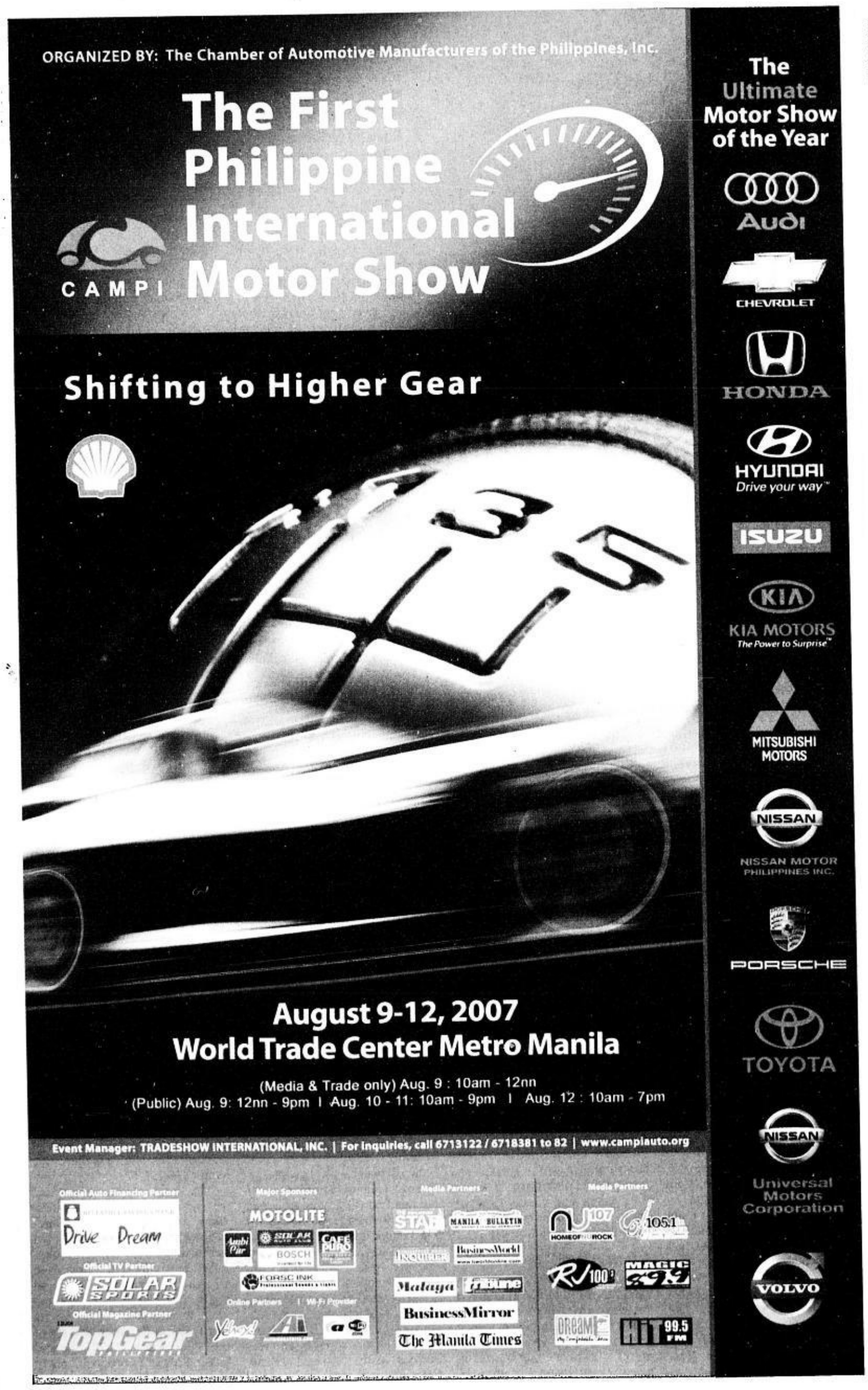
Vehicle of choice

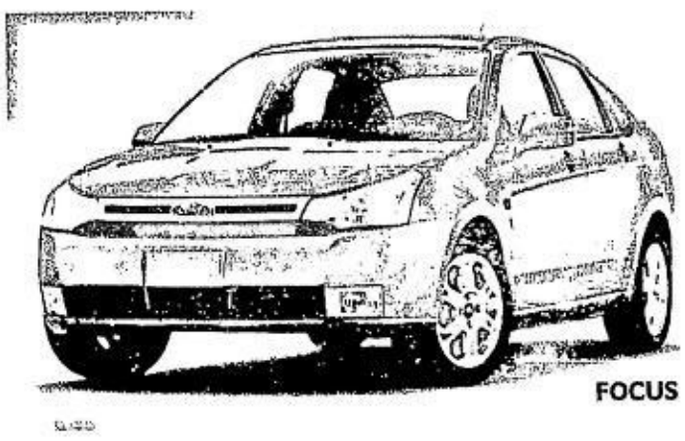
The 5 Series, long considered the vehicle of choice for business leaders due to its "strong presence and refined dynamism," has had some retouches of its own. At the front, headlights now come with clear-glass technology with transparent glass panels covering the direct indicators, to cite an example.

The Xpo also provided sales momentum through a multiplier effect. The weekend series and its accompanying special events (launch of Rogue magazine, the unveiling of the BMW Philippine Miniature Art Cars) deliver over thousands of guests—excluding the thousands of referrals from interested customers.

According to its organizers, the Xpo's success is directly related to BMW's strong brand and the undeniable appeal of its product—a unique combination of factors that would not necessarily be present in other car manufacturers.

LIGHTWEIGHT TECH. G650 XMoto, one of the new machines with the smallest engines in the BMW model range, gives on-road riding pleasure.





FOCUS

'Casa' service, with a side order of Focus, please

By Tessa R. Salazar

IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD A FORD Focus, but intent on getting one (what with your old, beat-up Ford sedan sending signals it wants to retire very soon), then a "short-cut" to owning one might just work for you.

For the first time, Ford Group Philippines, through FordService, is giving away a 2007 Ford Focus 1.6L four-door Trend automatic as a grand prize.

Open to all Ford owners

The raffle is open to all Ford owners of 1997 to current models who avail of genuine Ford parts and accessories, general repair, diagnostics, body and paint services and Ford Solutions products such as extended warranty, scheduled service plan and emergency roadside assistance. The promo period is ongoing until Sept. 30.

Accessories or service packages worth P30,000 each will also be raffled off as consolation prizes.

Says Dave Macasadia, vice president for customer service operations: "It is not every day that a car manufacturer gets to raffle off a brand-new car."

To qualify, a customer must present his or her receipt at the Ford dealership where he or she will be given one raffle stub for every P10,000 single-receipt purchase made.

12-step process

During the media press conference at the new Ford Global City at the Fort, Macasadia explained Ford's 12-step process of quality service, particularly the interactive reception process which set Ford apart from its competitors.

Service advisers place the vehicles on lifters where they go through the vehicle inspection together with the customers, discuss the current condition of the units, provide them with clear explanations on the services to be performed and complete the checklist with the owners.

Needless to say, the more beat-up your old Ford sedan is, the more raffle stubs—and of course, the more chances—you will have to get that new Ford Focus without a sweat. Doesn't that make you want to abuse your old car some more before turning it in for repairs? We leave that up to you.

New 911 GT2 with 530 hp: high performance sports car with low fuel consumption (See story on page B2-3)

to be young • to be you • to be young • To be you!

LIFESTYLE

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

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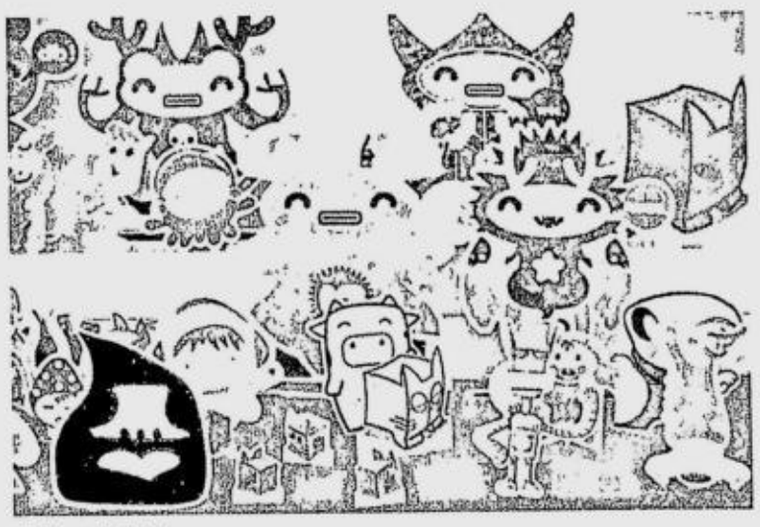
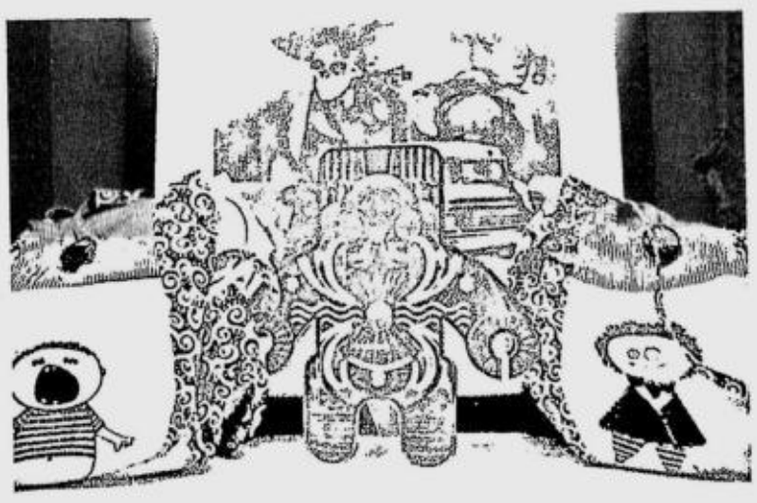
Beverly Hills 90210 SMART

The Search For Miss Hotty (No More)

WATCH OUT FOR THE UNVEILING ON JULY 26, 2007



ART at F*ART



BAGS and accessories with a dose of attitude

Secrets
Part 2

More secrets spilled this week. A bar that rocks and serves great food, a green tea haven, a fondue venue, an oyster haunt and more

If you have your own secrets to spill, e-mail us at Ls_2bu@inquirer.com.ph.

GET your taste of fashion and art at F*ART.

for fab Pinoys

Text and photos by Zee Castro
2bU! Correspondent

RIGHT SMACK IN THE middle of busy Kamuning is an interesting concept store where art and fashion meet.

The creative minds behind F*ART (Fashion ART) are sisters Happy and Viva Andrada. Clear believers in Filipino talent, they wanted to provide a venue where designers and artists can showcase their creations.

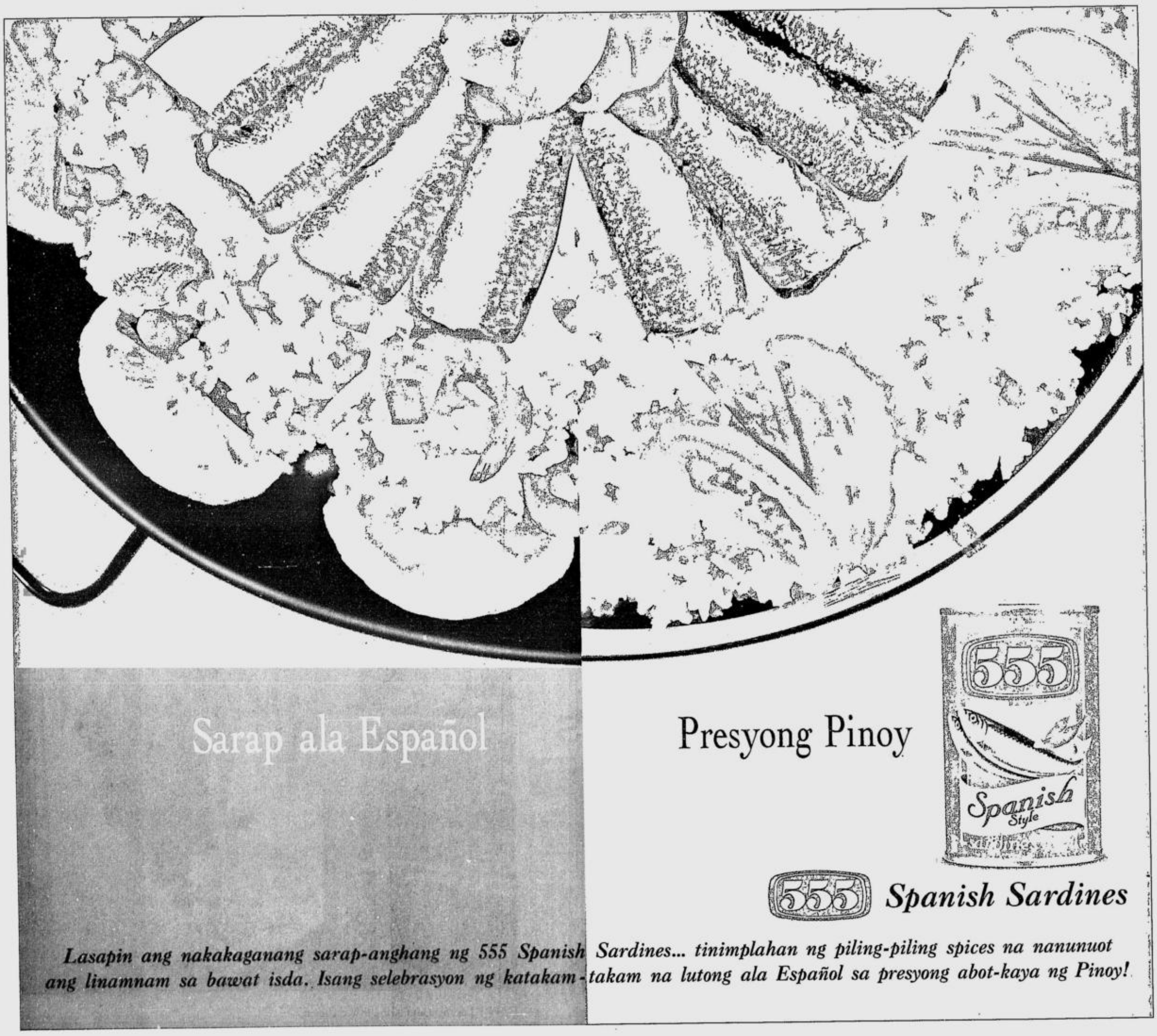
The first floor houses fashion items where one can find a wide variety of brands and items to choose from.

F*ART has unique shirts from Happy Rocks, Whipped Tee Couture, Basic Twist, and Happy Days. They even have funky pajamas called Happy Jammies! Flats Shoes, Buffet Bags, accessories by Dennis Celestial, Vida Jewelries, Simply Lin, Baubles Bangles 'N' Beads, Mimi Tecson are also part of their inventory. One can also check out the collections of gowns, dresses, fashionable creations by Happy Andrada, Tammy Tan, Pam Villapando, Kriska Sy, Daniella De Corsie, Regine Dulay, Princess Keng, Dimples Lim, and a whole lot of other budding designers.

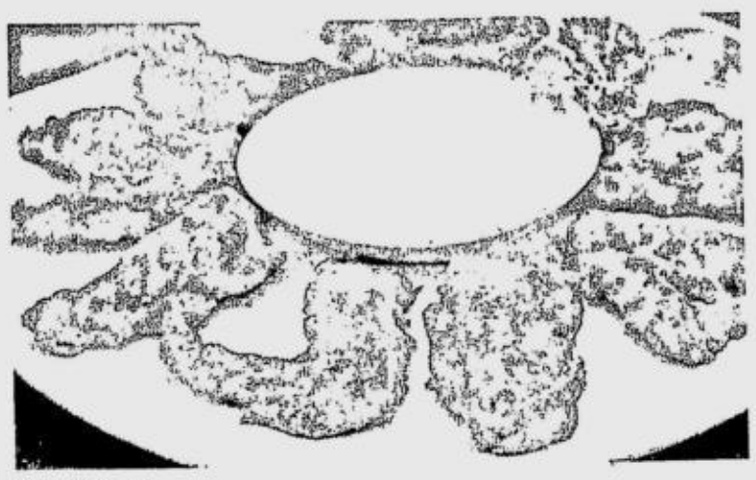
For the Art part, the 2nd floor is a venue for events such as exhibit openings, poetry and spoken word performances, and WeeWill-Doodle sessions. Selections from Baked, Electrolychee, Mark Salvatus, Nelz Yumul, and Powernap Collective, Oddball Friends and Morbie Dolls are showcased here as well.

Fashion ART also offers clothing customization and embellishment, Jamaican hair braiding, tattooing, artistic haircut,

FUNKY/ C2



FISH and chips



SPICY wings

PIZZA Margherti

One you have to take

After three owner changes and three name changes, Route 196 is bringing in the crowd with a killer combination of live music, art, good food and ice-cold drinks

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Jill Lejano

MONICA BARRETTO, Allan Madrilejos, Geth Savellano and Eric Enriquez used to hang out at a place called Border Grill after work and after badminton sessions. They spent so much time there that when the owner was leaving for the United States, he offered to sell the place to them.

"We joked about buying the place because we loved it so much. But we weren't really ready then," says Barretto.

Border Grill soon became Inihaw Republic under a new owner, and Monica and her friends remained regulars there. But the owner of Inihaw Republic soon became busy with his catering business and decided to sell the bar too, asking the group if they wanted to take over.

"This time, we said yes. Buying the bar was like a full circle moment for us. We hung out there all the time, that was where our friendship grew. We witnessed the bar's transition. We saw it change and now we own it," Barretto says.

Inihaw Republic is now known to people as Route 196. Although its official relaunch took place just last month, Barretto and her friends have actually been running the bar since October last year.

More than a bar

People troop to Route 196 to watch the many bands that play there, but Barretto is quick to stress that they're not just about music. Route 196 is a bar and restaurant that pushes music and art.

"We promote all kinds of good music, not just rock and roll. We believe in Filipino musicians and that over- and under-the-radar bands deserve an audience. We're not a hardcore gallery but we will definitely put more art in the bar. We will be having exhibits. We have the Lomolounge, a room with walls that are covered with lomographs by LomoManila."

Route 196 doesn't run out of bands and musical acts that keep people coming back.

"Every other Monday, we have Juan Pablo Dream's Mod Day Mondays. Other acts that regularly play include guitar duo Cacoy and Johnnoy; Pinoy rock legends The Jerks; and a super *galing* band from Baguio called The Spaceflower Show. We also have productions like Sweetspot Night, Ninja Kiss, Revolver, Cubism, Last Full Show and soon Terno Nights that will feature really talented indie bands. Route 196 is the only place where you'll catch Hannah of SessionRoad doing a solo acoustic set."

The owners get a kick out of letting different bands build rapport with other bands and with the Route 196 audience. "It's a great mix of bands of diverse influences and it's always thrilling seeing them sharing views, supporting each other. *May* community," adds Barretto.

Route 196 also has iPod night. "You can bring your iPod and play your playlist—around six to seven songs."

THE OWNERS want Route 196 to be your home away from home.

THE SPACE Flower Show at Route 196

Although there is a lot of focus on entertainment, food did not take a backseat in the owners' list of priorities.

"We all decided on what type of food we will be serving but the actual recipes were developed by co-owner and chef Geth Savellano. We're constantly coming up with new dishes," says Barretto.

Bestsellers include the pizzas, the spicy wings, *salpicao*, chicken fingers, fish and chips, pork *sisig*, nachos and tuna *sisig*.

Barretto recommends that first-timers try the Noypi Pizza (*kesong puti* and *tinapa*); Tinapa Roll; Chili Cheese Sticks ("We use *flautas* instead of *lumpia* wrapper"); Herb Chicken; Tofu BBQ; and Pepper-seared Tuna.

"Right now we also have a promo for beers—they're three for P100," she adds.

Busy owners

Although they all have other things that keep them busy—Barretto is a freelance photographer, Madrilejos is a magazine editor, Savellano is a chef, and Enriquez is in sales and marketing—they all love being bar owners.

"We all love meeting people, we treat the customers like friends. We love seeing the crowd dancing and enjoying the bands. We love regulars who keep coming back. We love being fans of the bands we adore. We love photographers and artists who share with us their passion and art. We love it that we learn to deal with the business side of things," says Barretto.

"As Eric would say: *'Bahay ninyo 'to.'* It's a cozy hole-in the-wall place where you can just kick back, relax, listen to good music, beer in hand and enjoy yummy food. This sounds cliché, but it's a place where you can be yourself, everyone is friendly, no judgments. It's your home away from home. It's a real good-vibes place. *Parang* 'Cheers' where everyone knows your name."

Visit Route 196 at 196-A Katipunan Ave., Blue Ridge A., QC. Call 4391972 or visit www.coolestbar.multiply.com. The bar is open from 6 p.m.-2 a.m.

FUNKY pickings by Happy Rocks

SHOPPING stop

HAPPY Jammies and embellished shoes

Fun for fab Pinoys

From page C1

A SHOWCASE of Filipino talent

makeup and styling services.

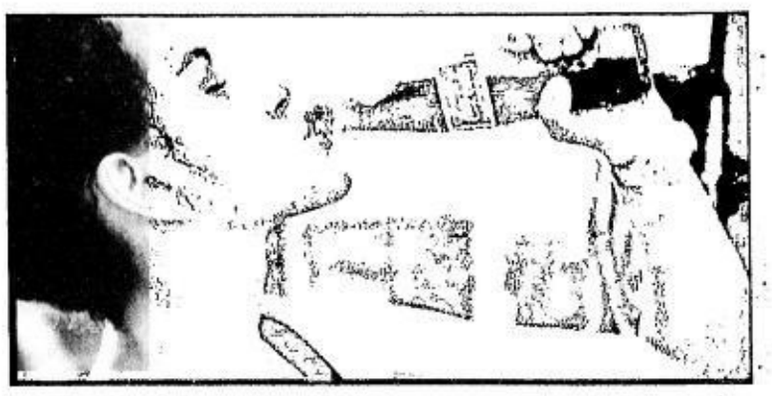
Two-thumbs up to the Andrada sisters for providing a great venue to showcase homegrown talent! Fashion ART prides itself in offering "funky fashionable finds fit for fun fab Filipinos." By Filipinos, for Filipinos.

We tell you, when you visit this fab store, you will surely not walk out without a bagful of goodies in tow!

Located at K-D corner K-1st, Kamuning, QC. Visit www.happyfart.com for more details.

E-mail the author at zemirah@gmail.com

GRAB an Oddball Friend.



EVERY Coca-Cola fizz and gulp pushes you to run away from hesitation and to just go for whatever you want.

COCA-COLA BELIEVES IN chasing after your dream. The worldwide beverage leader believes in today's generation's abilities and capabilities to make things happen for themselves.

Everything is within your reach. Everything is possible. And everything is achievable. One just has to have the guts to make that first move and make things happen for oneself.

The present generation of teens has to accomplish a great deal in a couple of years. They must establish a better grasp of who they are, and they must begin to make a difficult separation from their parents on the road toward greater personal independence.

For teens to overcome obstacles, one must find out how they do things and why they do them. In a Teen Trends study conducted in 2006 by the Harrison Group, they surveyed teens aged 13-18 on their thoughts and habits, and at the same time to predict the trends for the coming years.

The study estimates that despite their age, teens have great purchasing power, thanks to money coming in from part-time jobs and parents. Teenagers spend annually on clothes, eating out, cars, movies and cell phones, according to the report.

They're also spending money on technology which includes mobile phones, digital cameras and portable music players.

As one might expect, music is high on the average teen's to-do list. Their love of music is second only to their love of friends and even ahead of their love of family, according to the study.

An estimated 68 percent of teens have created profiles on social networks like MySpace.com, Xanga or Facebook. More than a quarter of the population keeps in touch with friends online on a daily basis, either through instant messaging, e-mail, message boards or chat rooms.

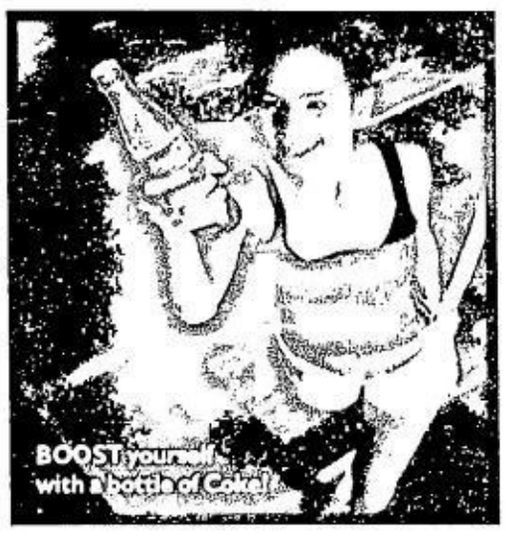
Given that this is the way many teenagers are, Coca-Cola joins them in their journey. Coke encourages them to go after what they want because that's what Coke stands for—all about Yes, and never standing down and accepting no.

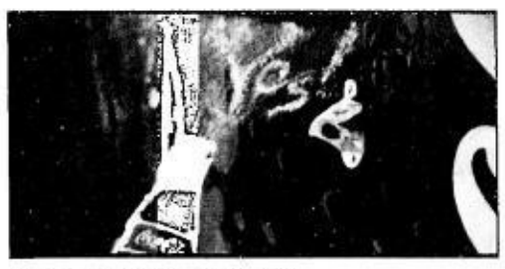
Be it an audition, a team tryout, a new sport, etc., all these experiences challenge the teenager and mold him as a person.

Rejection, disappointment and insecurities are overshadowed by a different kind of confidence. It's about grabbing the opportunities and taking chances for that one big break that will change your life forever.

Coca-Cola's latest campaign provides uplifting refreshment and signals the start of something great. It's always yes in the face of every no which encourages today's teens to take their first step in reaching their goals, whatever they may be.

COKE'S newest TV commercial encourages today's teens to pursue their passion.





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WANDERS is a one-of-a-kind musical extravaganza that top bills our best homegrown talents in the entertainment scene. It showcases world-class Filipino performers who are out to captivate audiences with soulful renditions of timeless classics and vibrant dance numbers. A fusion of cultures, the show also highlights gravity-defying aerial acrobatics and stunning displays of skills by flamboyant performers from China and Russia.

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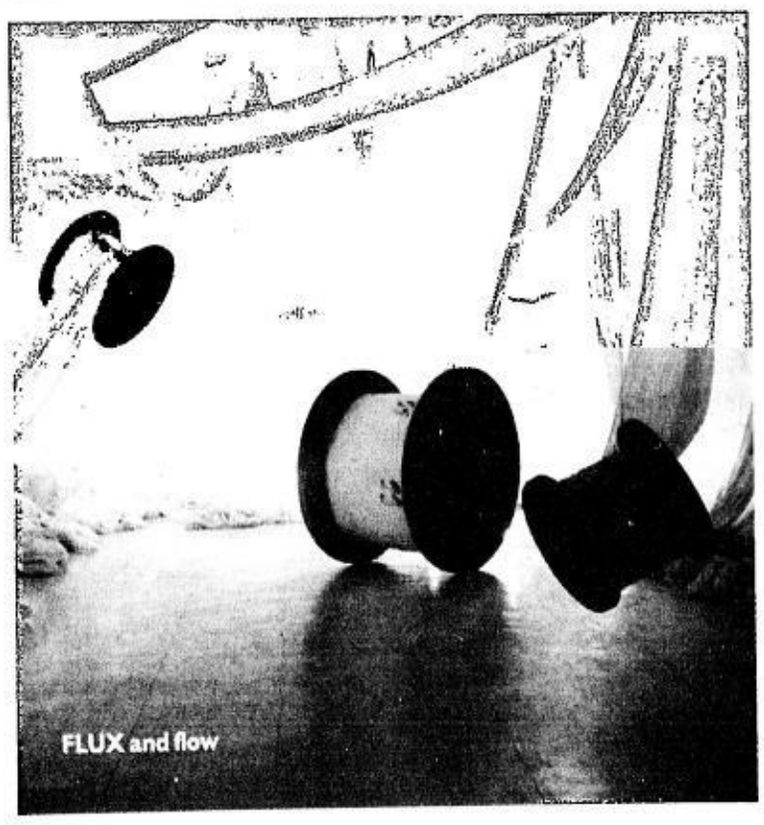
Global art by a global citizen

An art installation interprets the borderless world

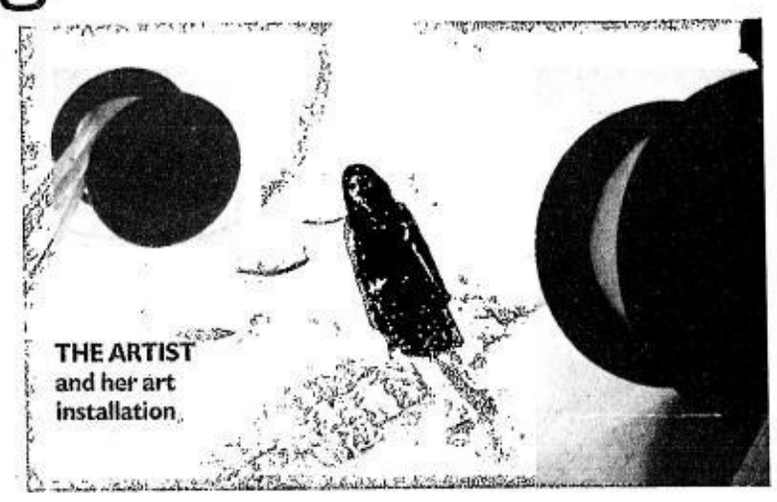
By Sanna Vohra
2bU! Contributor


FLUX and flow

BECAUSE SHE grew up as the daughter of an Indian diplomat, living in Europe for 15 years, studying art in Sweden and the Philippines, and living in Egypt and other countries as an expat, artist Vinita Karim has been exposed to a myriad of different cultures. She calls herself a "porous" person, and it is this absorption of cultures that has led her to create "Artmasala."

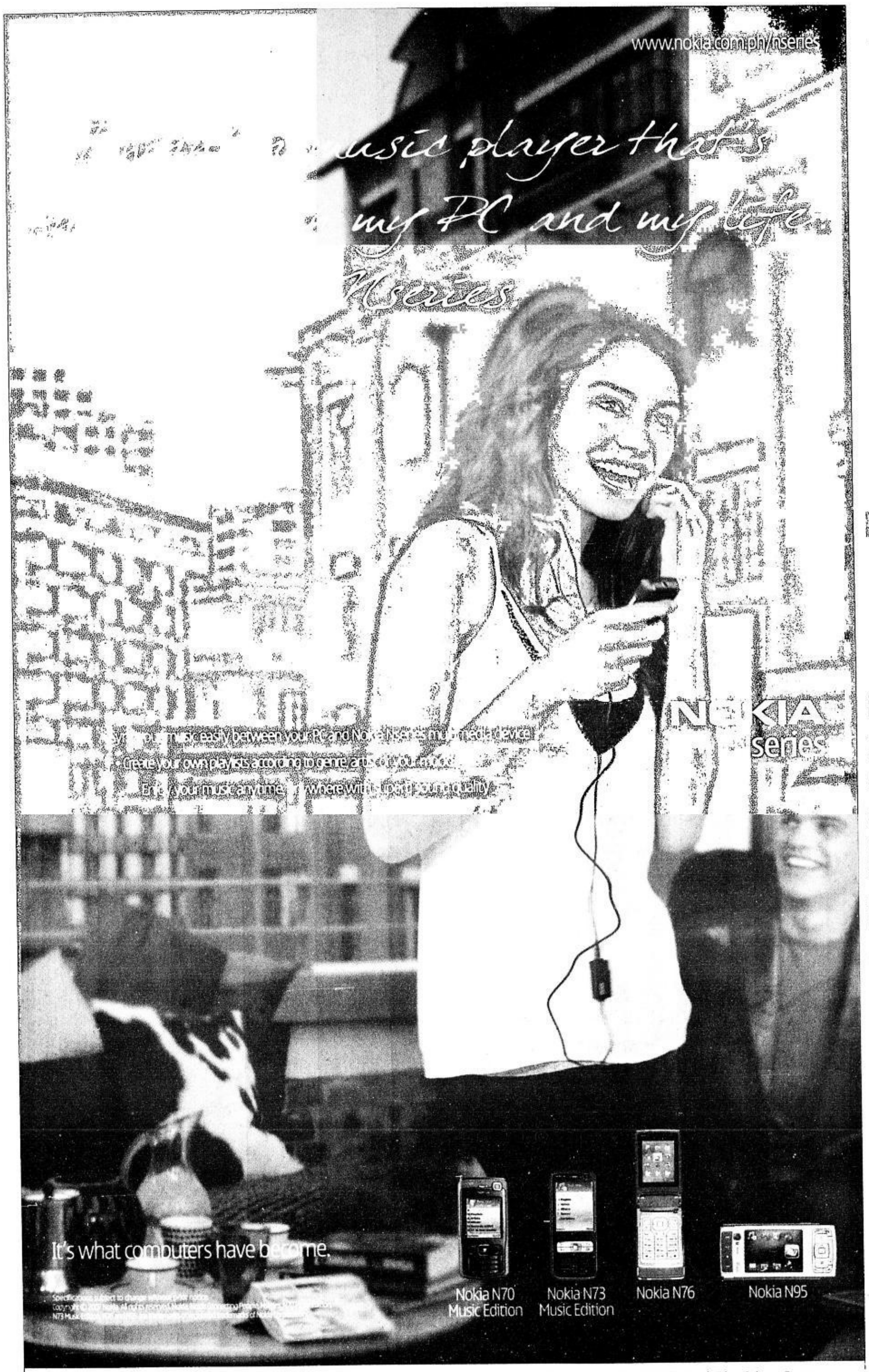
"Artmasala" is a postmodern conceptual installation made of 700 meters of fabric hand-dyed with dried flowers and spices (known in Hindi as *masala*). The fluidity of the transparent fabrics (such as *katsa*) draped around the room in the University of the Philippines Diliman's Corredor Gallery embodies the borderless world of constant information flux and flow that characterizes life today.

The medley of colors and spices used to dye the fabrics represents the divergent influences on her art. The fabric originates from three massive wooden spools which, according to the artist, "represent the machinery of globalization, or the *chakra* of life." The setup gives off peppery smells and a variety of textures so that the unusual installation is an experience not just for the eyes, but for the touch, smell and mind as well.


THE ARTIST and her art installation

The installation is displayed at the Corredor Gallery, College of Fine Arts, UP Diliman until July 30.

Other works by Vinita Karim (tel. 0917-2073598 or e-mail vinitakarim@gmail.com) are displayed in The Room Upstairs, 2/F, LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia, Bel Air, Makati.



Available at the following Nokia Stores nationwide: Greenbelt 1, Glorietta Digital Xchange, Tomas Morato, Festival Mall, SM City North Edsa, Gaisano Davao, Gateway Mall, Robinsons Manila, Robinsons Galleria, SM Davao, Tacloban City, Lim Ket Kai Center CDO, Alabang Town Center, Mall of Asia, Podium, Greenhills, SM City Cebu, SM Iloilo, SM Bacolod, Rockwell, Fort Bonifacio, Trinoma, Dagupan

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Leisure realty firm marks 5 years

HIGHLANDS PRIME, INC. (HPI), a publicly listed high-end leisure property developer and majority-owned by the SM Group, celebrates five years of successfully building beautiful homes inside the exclusive Tagaytay Highlands.

HPI will commemorate its fifth anniversary with a grand event called "High at Five" on July 27, 5:30 p.m., at the Bahia Room of Hotel InterContinental Manila.

The evening will showcase HPI's real-estate projects, particularly its first residential lot development in Tagaytay Highlands called The Hillside. Here homeowners will own the land and will be free to create their own dream log home. A special promotional offer only on this night awaits buyers of The Hillside.

The event is HPI's way of showing appreciation for the support extended by its stockholders, friends, Tagaytay Highlands members, prospective clients and suppliers.

STUDENTS for science. Participants of the National Youth Science Summit

National youth summit on science and technology

OVER 200 STUDENTS RECENTLY GATHERED for the National Youth Science Summit at the Museum of the Filipino People at Rizal Park.

The theme of this year's summit, "Changing Earth, Changing Lives," encouraged students to pursue the field of science and technology because of its impact on the nation and the world.

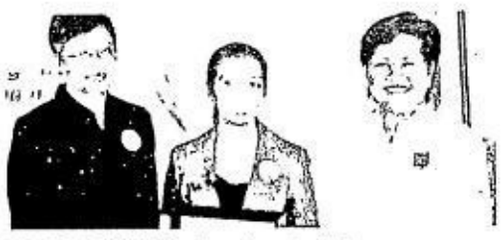
The summit focused on three main issues: global warming and climate change, GMO as food, and renewable energy. Resource persons included Rosalinda de Guzman, Dr. Cynthia Heydreda and Mario Marasigan.

The students were divided into discussion groups, and the resulting resolutions will be presented to the President, the secretary of Science and Technology, as well as many other members of the government.

Among the many motivational speakers at the summit was Presidential Daughter Luli Arroyo, who urged students to continue studying science and technology in order to improve the lives of their fellow Filipinos. She ended her speech by reminding students that if they end up working abroad to expand their horizons, they should return and bring their acquired knowledge and skills back to the Philippines.

Kristina Ilagan from Marikina Science High School said of the science summit: "I came here to gain knowledge about problems such as climate change so that I can share my knowledge with my classmates and my community."

Sanna Vohra


PRESIDENTIAL daughter Luli Arroyo (center) with Estrella Alabastro of DOST and Ester Ogena, Science Education Institute director

PHOTOS BY ROGER CARPIO

MARTHA'S Caesar Salad

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Mr. Rockefeller, a quiet steak-and-seafood restaurant located in Greenbelt 3, serves mostly American food with a twist

OYSTERS with blue cheese and grapes

Mister Good Food

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

DESPITE THE GROWING number of themed restaurants in the metro, very few can claim that their food is outstanding. In fact, a good number of restaurants rely on hip décor, DJs and a mile-long list of drinks to get by, instead of focusing on food.

Mr. Rockefeller, a quiet steak-and-seafood restaurant located in Greenbelt 3, is one of the few restaurants in the area that doesn't need to be crowned as one of the hippest spots in town just to get people to eat there. There are no trendy cocktails, no flashing disco lights, and no bed-slash-tables to attract the young set.

However, what will keep people coming back to Mr. Rockefeller is the food.

The restaurant, which opened in October 2006, serves mostly American food with a twist. The interiors are homey—whitewashed wooden walls, weather-beaten in appearance. Oyster shells stud the wood paneling, while old black-and-white photos of oyster farmers lend a rustic feel to the place.

According to Chef Valerie Balanay, most of Mr. Rockefeller's customers are families and dating couples who head to the restaurant whenever they're up to large portions of good food. She takes particular pride in their steaks and oysters, which are served up in over a dozen ways.

"We do this thing we call 'Steaks and Serenades,'" Balanay says. "Whenever people order some of our prime items on the menu—wagyu beef, for instance—we present the food with a couple of songs in order to make them really appreciate the dish."

She added, "That particular service makes us popular with men who are out to impress someone on the first date, or during special occasions."

For something like that, you'd expect to shell out a couple of thousand pesos at least, but the prices in the restaurant seem reasonable, although not downright cheap. However, the portions are quite large; each dish serves two, unless you're particularly hungry.

The wagyu beef in Mr. Rockefeller is P1,200, while it would set you back by P2,500-3,500 in other restaurants. The USDA Choice Grade Striploin costs P950 and is served with mashed potatoes melted with blue cheese and vegetables.

Other bestsellers include the Boneless Bourbon Ribs (US Angus ribs smothered with Bourbon barbecue sauce and served with baked beans and creamed corn, P395), the Australian Tenderloin (P595), and the Barbecue Grill Solos (boneless US Angus ribs served with barbecue sauce and Java rice).

Looking for a healthy option? We recommend the Alaskan Sole Fillet (pan-fried white fish topped with lemon pepper sauce

MISTER/ D4

PAN-FRIED Alaskan Sole Fillet with Garlic Noodles

P930

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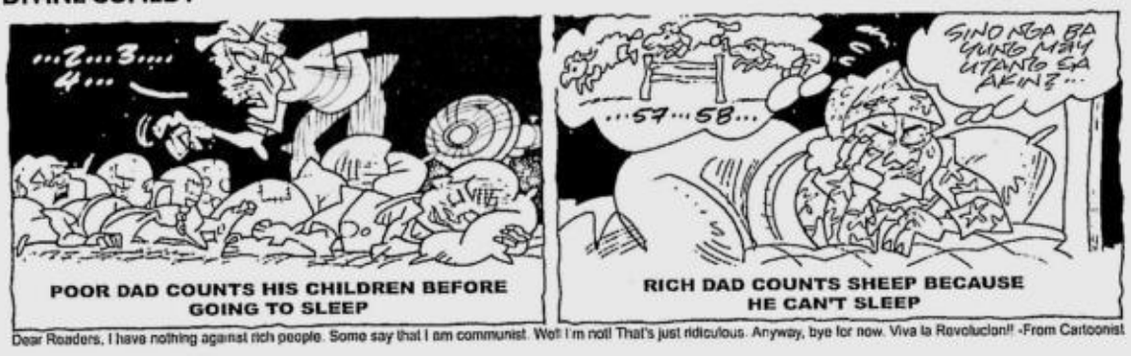
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



Dear Readers, I have nothing against rich people. Some say that I am communist. Well I'm not! That's just ridiculous. Anyway, bye for now. Viva la Revolucion!! -From Cartoonist

KIKO MACHINE

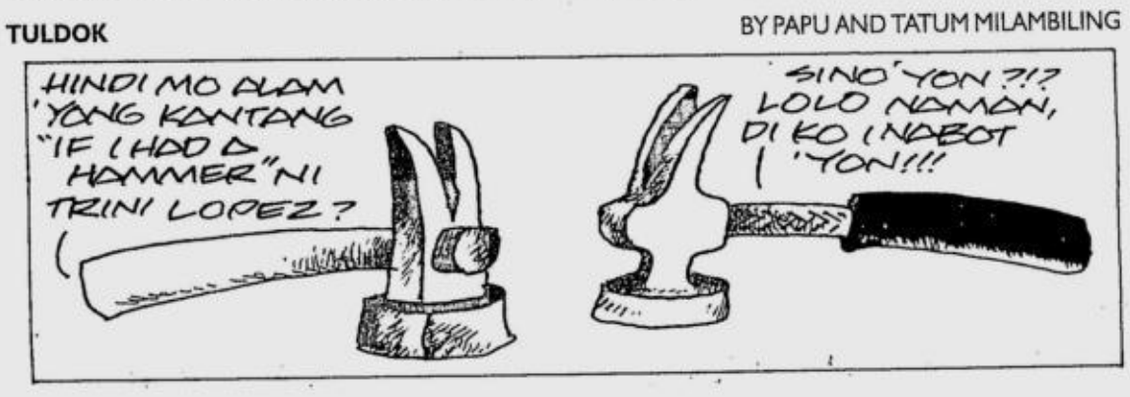
BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



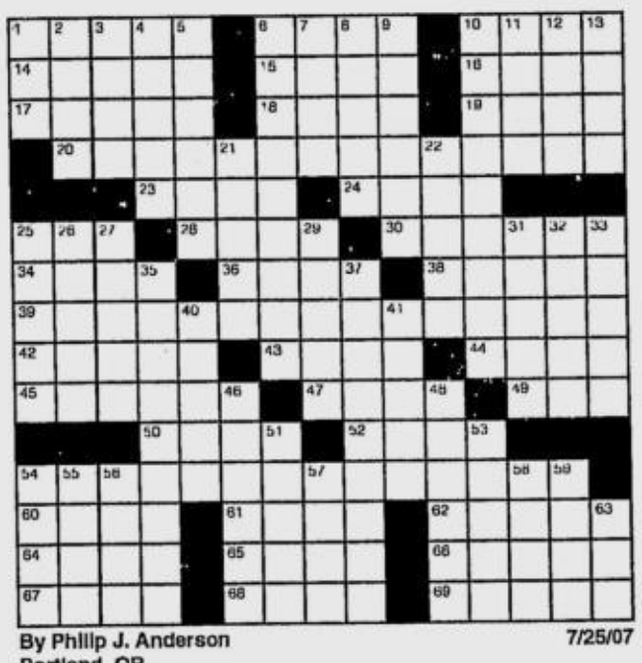
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 ER fluid
6 Surveyor's map
10 Boxers, e.g.
14 Buccaneer's home
15 Wealthy
16 Mr. Knievel
17 Drag through the mud
18 Way of old Rome
19 "__ Mia"
20 King and queen
23 Pianist Peter
24 Observed
25 Fa follower
28 Chihuahua kid
30 Lampoon
34 Toward the mouth
36 Florentine glassmaker Antonio
38 Renaissance fiddle
39 King and queen
42 Wind: pref.
43 Before long
44 Teammate of Spahn
45 Razor sharpeners
47 Mach+ planes
49 #6 on the dial
50 Ripken and Coolidge
52 Passing grades
54 King and Queen
60 Operatic song
61 "Hud" Oscar winner
62 Slobber
64 Debatable
65 Story
66 Cheri of "SNL"
67 Pangolin treats
68 The __ the limit!
69 Sorcerers

DOWN
1 Score figs.
2 Gentle one
3 ACLU wd.
4 France's neighbor
5 Weasel's cousin
6 Inmates
7 Vilnius lang.
8 Top servers
9 Painful spasms
10 Decorative wine bottles
11 Oblong circle
12 Frobe of "Goldfinger"
13 Dispatch, like a dragon
21 Skater Slutskaya
22 Pine (for)
25 Couches
26 Praying figure
27 Shoe salesman, at times
29 Church calendars
31 Twin __ suspension
32 Kidney enzyme
33 Prefix for savings
35 Clinton's group
37 Triangle type
40 Amount not covered by health insurance
41 Chip maker
46 Blases
48 Rarely
51 Furtive fellow
53 Mattress maker
54 Tibetan priest
55 Elvis __ Presley
56 Mad mob
57 Actress Tyne
58 "Performance" director
59 Old times
63 Fleur-de-__



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
7/25/07

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

M	E	T	E	D		P	A	S	T	A		J	A	M
O	V	U	L	E		O	C	E	A	N		U	F	O
M	A	G	I	C	M	O	M	E	N	T		B	O	O
				R	I	L	E			A	N	I	O	N
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N	A	D	E	R		B	L	E	E	D		E	V	E
G	I	G	S		D	O	V	E	S		R	Y	E	S
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7/25/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are noble and honorable. You have a certain dignity about you. Your demeanor is well-placed because you're an idealist. Adventure and drama will always attract you. Your personal philosophy of living is important to you. You're imaginative, and you delight in whimsical experiences. Your year ahead could bring major changes, perhaps as significant as in 1996-97.
Birthdate of: Matt LeBlanc, actor; Estelle Getty, actress; Brad Renfro, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Plans to travel, to further your education, to deal with foreign countries or to explore opportunities in publishing and the media look very promising today! You feel encouraged by recent news or events.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can definitely benefit from the wealth or generosity of others today. Keep your pockets open. If someone wants to give you something, say yes!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Relationships with partners and close friends are upbeat and positive today. You truly enjoy the company of others, and vice versa. It's a good day to party or talk to people.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be alert for opportunities where you work today or opportunities to get a better job. Something can improve your health or your employment situation

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a wonderful day for romance, love affairs, playful times with children, vacations and the arts. Sporting activities or movies will also please you. Enjoy!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Family connections are very positive and hopeful today. You feel encouraged by whatever is going on. Invite the gang over and enjoy good times together.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Don't hesitate to share your ideas with others. You're in a positive, optimistic frame of mind. Conversations with siblings and relatives will be pleasant and upbeat.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a wonderful day for business and commerce. Make note of whatever moneymaking ideas you have. Why not run them up the flagpole to see if anyone salutes?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You feel happy and buoyant today. The Moon is in your sign, and it's lining up with your ruler, lucky Jupiter. This makes you feel confident, expansive and generous to everyone.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Time spent alone doing research or just working will please you today. You're very happy to be your own best friend right now.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Conversations with friends, especially a female friend, will be rewarding and reassuring to you. It's nice to hang out with others when they have a positive take on life!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good time to talk to bosses, parents, teachers and authority figures. These people are going to listen to whatever you have to say. (Finally!)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

				6				
			9	8	7		6	1
6		9				2		3
4		8				5		2
2	6						8	4
	3						1	
		1				8		
		6	4		1	7		
			8	2	6			

Difficulty Level ★★★

7/25

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

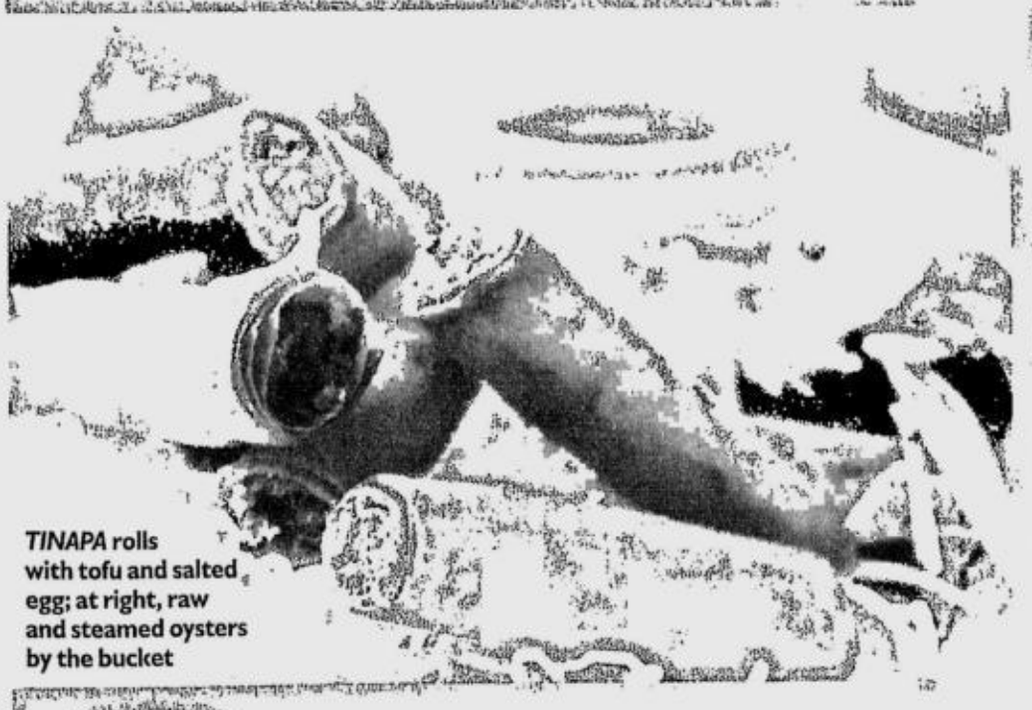
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	2	9	8	1	7	4	5	6
1	8	5	4	3	6	7	9	2
6	7	4	9	5	2	8	3	1
5	1	7	2	6	8	9	4	3
9	6	3	5	4	1	2	8	7
2	4	8	7	9	3	6	1	5
8	3	1	6	2	4	5	7	9
4	9	6	1	7	5	3	2	8
7	5	2	3	8	9	1	6	4

Difficulty Level ★★

7/24



TINAPA rolls with tofu and salted egg; at right, raw and steamed oysters by the bucket

Oyster addiction

For relaxed and chummy dining, go for Oyster Boy

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

FOR DINING OUT, YOU MAY want to go for the whole nine yards—cloth napkins, piped-in classical music and fancy dishes served by snooty waiters. But there are times when you simply want to kick back, relax, and share piles of hot, savory food with your family and friends. If you're in the mood for the latter, then you'll probably like Oyster Boy.

From its name alone, you can be sure that the restaurant serves up all sorts of oysters. The restaurant serves up the usual suspects—fresh oysters by the bucket, oysters baked with cheese and topped with bacon—but you also have interesting variations of the seafood served in a half-shell.

For starters, you can try the Oysters with Blue Cheese (P145 for half a dozen, P280 for a dozen), which are baked and served with Blue D'Avergne cheese whipped with cream and nuts. A similar dish is the Oysters Thermidore (P145, P280), which is made of oyster topped with béchamel sauce, cheese, bell pepper and onions. Oysters Boursin (P145, P280) is topped with a dollop of heavy Boursin cheese.

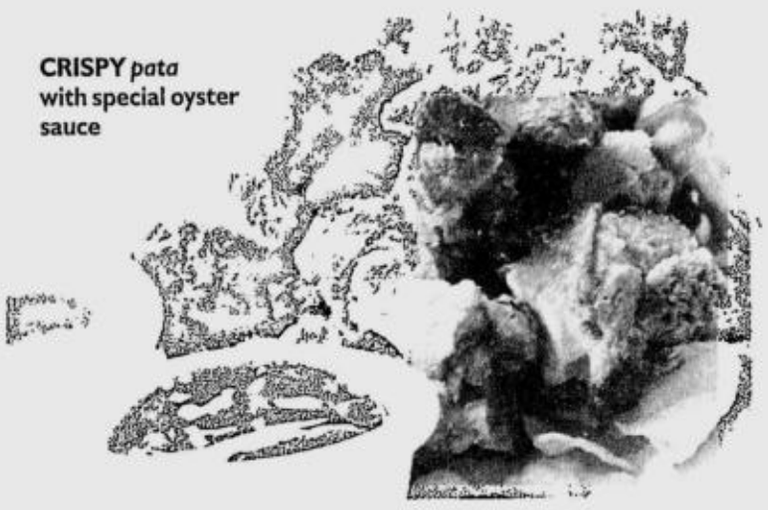
If you're in the mood for something more native, you can go for the Oysters with Crab Fat and Garlic (P185, 280), which are splendid with a mound of warm garlic rice, or the Oysters Kilawin (P155, P235), cooked in a method that the late Doreen Fernandez described as "liquid fire"—by cooking them in vinegar and chili.

The Smoked Oyster Cake, a pancake of sautéed smoked oysters cooked with eggs and chives, is topped with garlic sour cream—perfect for those who want to have a large bite of oysters in one go.

Oysters and beer

"Oyster Boy has two kinds of customers: the oyster-and-beer group, and the oysters-and-wine set," said Dennis Gan, one of the owners of Oyster Boy. "While we would prefer to be known as a dining restaurant because of the quality and taste of our food, we welcome those who just want to kick back with a beer and a bucket of oysters as well."

Some dishes are great when they go with casual drinks—beer costs P32 a bottle—while some dishes are meant to be appreciated on their own. For the drinking buddies, we recommend the Chicken in Patis Glaze (P175), chicken wings coated in sweet-salty sauce and served with cucumber dip. The Adobong Pusit at Baboy sa Piña (P180) is a heavy dish of squid and pork cooked in squid ink and flavored with herbs. The Smoked Tinapa Roll (P165) contains smoked milkfish rolled with tofu and egg, and served with sweet-spicy vinegar.



CRISPY *pata* with special oyster sauce

OYSTERS topped with melted cheese

A lot of the food in Oyster Boy is typically Filipino; you'll find dishes such as Pork Barbecue (P85 for three sticks), Sinuglaw (pork *liempo* and scallops cooked in vinegar, P140), and grilled stuffed squid. But some dishes have an interesting twist; their bestseller is Crispy Pata with Oyster Chili Sauce (P295), which is served with a dip made with leftover oysters. Their desserts are rather unusual; try the Goat's Milk Pannacotta (P95), or the Guimaras Mango Brownie (P75).

While there are some unusual twists in the restaurant's food, most of the time the dishes are simple, homey and down-to-earth. If you're looking for a place where you can share a platter of oysters and crispy *pata* without breaking the bank, this is where you should go.

Oyster Boy is located at the Shopwise Arcade, Araneta Center Cubao, and Metrowalk, Ortigas. Call 9119089.

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

MATCHA and Roasted Green Tea Latte, P80

ANMITSU, P128

TORIDON, P168

ASPARABACON
Maki, P148

Tea haven

If you love green tea, this is the perfect place for you

Text and photos by Zee Castro
2bU! Correspondent

I FIRST READ ABOUT KOZUI Green Tea in my fave food blog, Dessertcomesfirst.com. When I saw a photo of the Anmitsu—a Japanese version of *halo-halo*—I just knew I had to check it out. When I finally got to visit the place, it totally won me over.

Kozui Green Tea is an interesting café located in Tomas Morato, QC. It has fresh, cozy interiors, and its menu is quite impressive.

Its green tea beverages include POM Tea, iced green tea flavored with pomegranate syrup. If you're craving for something cold, the variants of Korichio—cream blended frappes—are worth a try.

For hot drinks, we recommend Matcha and Roasted Green Tea Lattes (P80). The flavor is just perfect, and not overpowering at all.

For dessert, check out the cakes on display. The eye-catching Tearamisu is pleasantly soft and has the right amount of sweetness.

Another must-try is the Anmitsu, since Kozui's take on this traditional Japanese dessert is beyond glorious.

For P128, you can enjoy a big bowl of green tea jelly, shaved ice, fruit jelly, chewy dango balls, sweet azuki beans, taro jam and a generous swirl of green tea ice cream. It's as yummy as it looks!

Kozui Green Tea also offers a variety of Japanese eats. On the menu are chilled noodles, salads (prices range from P120-P230), and hot dishes such as Asparabacon Maki, Special Tokayaki and rice dishes such as Toridon.

KOZUI Green Tea

If you want to extend your Kozui experience, take out some of its green tea and black sesame cookies (P30). Aside from loose leaf tea variants in jars and canisters, also displayed are tea-related items such as cups, stirrers, mug covers and cute green plush toys.

Located at 258 Tomas Morato, QC. Call 4132705. Opens 11 a.m., Tuesday-Saturday, and 4 p.m., Sunday-Monday. Closing time is at 12:30 a.m.

E-mail the author at zemirah@gmail.com

TEARAMISU

BEEF fondue with assorted dips

The Old Swiss Inn, a 24-hour restaurant that has long been a favorite of yuppies and executives, isn't just a place for business meetings, conferences and power lunches

FAMOUS chocolate fondue

Fond of

By Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

WHILE IT'S EASY TO LUG A LAPTOP AND reading materials to a coffee shop at just about every corner of the city, there are times when you just want to sit back, relax and get a healthy helping of good food while at work.

While packaged salads and banana-toffee pies (paired with gulps of coffee) can help you get by while you study for exams or stay up to do that all-important work presentation, it doesn't hurt to treat yourself to a little gourmet food once in a while.

The Old Swiss Inn, a 24-hour restaurant that has long been a favorite of yuppies and executives, isn't just a place for business meetings, conferences and power lunches. Ever since it installed free wireless Internet, the restaurant has had a steady stream of students coming in to read their notes over coffee and fondue, along with nervous young couples on their first date.

"Young people feel at home here," explains Katrina Limcaoco, owner of the Old Swiss Inn. "They can stay here all day with their laptops and just order a coffee. But they usually bring their friends and share a pot of fondue and just hang out. Sometimes, they drop by after really late parties to wind down and get some food, since we're open 24 hours."

We agree—there's just no reason to settle for bland doughnuts when you can have some of the Old Swiss Inn's specialty fondues. If you love cheese, you have to try the Waatlander Fondue (P650), a large pot of Gruyere and Emmenthal splashed with a little Kirsch. Served with a basket of crusty bread cubes, it's the perfect afternoon or late-night snack for a group of four.

If you're in the mood for something meatier, we recommend the Fondue Bourguignonne, two platters of prime beef tenderloin cubes accompanied by a carousel of condiments and fries. The beef cubes are served raw; you have to spear it on your fondue fork and dip it in boiling oil for a few seconds before you can fish it out, glistening in its natural juices, in order to dip it in your favorite sauces (which include pepper, mushroom, tomato concasse, herbed butter and mayonnaise dips flavored with paprika, garlic, curry, mustard, and marmalade).

The beef served at the Old Swiss Inn is tender, so eating almost-rare steaks is not a challenge.

The most popular of the fondue line, however, is the Toblerone chocolate fondue series. Because of the popularity of the Toblerone fondues, several variations have been added to the line: the Flaming Turtle (P395), for instance, contains melted dark chocolate, rum and walnuts, while the Chocolate Peanut Butter Surprise (P395) is a pot of milk chocolate with swirls of peanut butter.

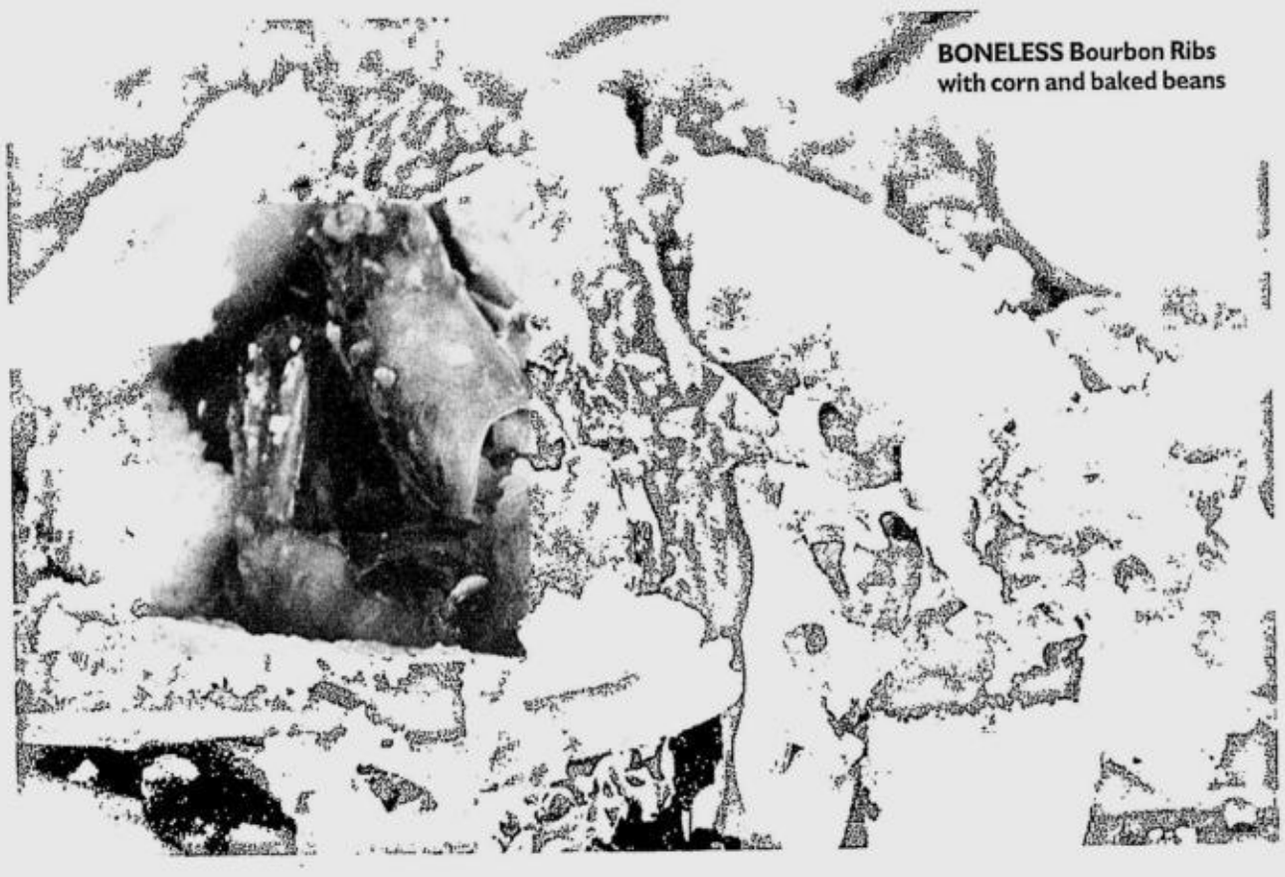
The Chocolate S'more (P395), a pot of melted Toblerone and toasted marshmallows, is served with graham crackers. Served with fresh fruit and marshmallows, the Toblerone fondues are smooth, creamy, and rich—plus, they don't taste like vegetable oil, as chocolate fountains often do.

"Our fondues are just chocolate and pure cream—no additives, no extenders," says Limcaoco.

Other signature dishes of the Old Swiss Inn include the Raclette (P700), a double serving of melted Swiss Raclette served with marble potatoes, gherkins and pearl onions; fresh corned beef brisket served with sautéed cabbage and boiled potatoes (P350), Zurich Geschnetzeltes (P310), shredded pork with mushroom cream sauce and potatoes; Pepper Steak Swiss Inn (P450), prime beef tenderloin served with green peppercorn sauce; and Bunderteller (P495), a selection of air-dried meat specialties such as prosciutto, dried beef, salami, smoked bacon and Landjaegger sausage.

Visit Old Swiss Inn at The Garden Plaza Hotel and Suites, 1030 Belen St., Paco Manila (tel. 5213002, 5262739, 5224835 loc 115); at the G/F, Somerset Olympia, Makati Avenue cor. Sto Tomas St., Makati City (tel. 8188251, 8180098, 8121010 locals 511 to 512); and at the 2/F BMW Autozentrum Lounge, Commerce Avenue cor. Madrigal Avenue, Ayala Alabang (tel. 8092326).

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com



BONELESS Bourbon Ribs with corn and baked beans

Mister Good Food

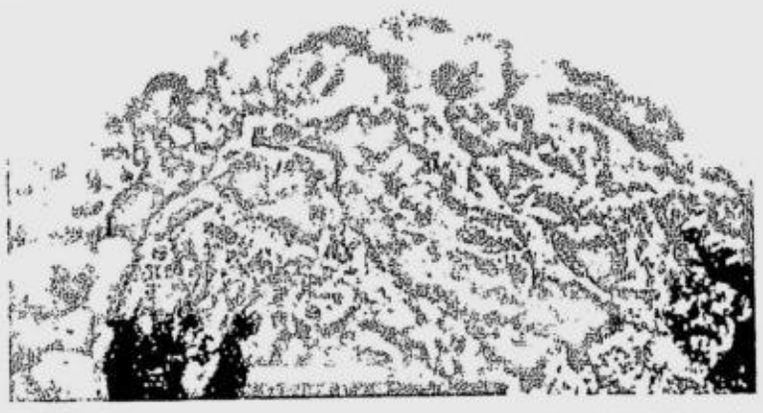
From page D1

and served with garlic noodles, P295), Martha's Caesar Salad (shrimps, peppers and crispy oysters tossed in lettuce and Caesar dressing, P199).

A trip to the restaurant is not complete without sampling its "spanking good" oysters. While the most popular variant is of course, the Oysters Rockefeller (oysters served with melted cheese and spinach), the lengthy list of flavors will make even the most discerning oyster fan happy. We liked the Oysters with Blue Cheese, which had a heaping spoonful of blue cheese and cream (topped with half a grape) on each shell.

To accompany your meal, you can choose from an extensive selection of wines in the restaurant.

"We make sure our customers are happy," says Balanay. "We give them the option of changing their side dishes if they want. For example, they can opt to change beans to plain rice, rice to fries. And we also make sure there's a special offering every week on our menu, so regulars have a reason to come back."



AUSTRALIAN steak with sidings

She adds, "We're planning to add more seafood to our menu soon, as well as other special dishes."

For the meantime, we're perfectly happy with Rockefeller's excellent lineup of dishes.

Mr. Rockefeller is located at Level 2, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 757-4802.

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

DISQUALIFIED

"SINUNGALING na Buwan" starring Jake Macapagal and Kalila Aguilos

'Technical problems' encumber Cinemalaya entry

By Marinel R. Cruz

FILMS GET DISQUALIFIED every year. This year, I'm the casualty," said director Ed Lejano, whose film, "Sinungaling na Buwan," was excluded from competition in this year's Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival, which is ongoing at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Lejano said his film encountered "a series of technical problems," which resulted in the cancellation of its gala screening on July 21.

Last year, two films—Jon Lazam's "Mga Anino sa Apuhap" and Khavn dela Cruz's "Larombata"—were disqualified. They had failed to meet the deadline.

"I saw it coming. Okay *na sa akin*," Lejano said of his movie's fate. "I did not deliver on time. I take full responsibility for that."

Gala

But screenings of "Sinungaling na Buwan" will push through, with the gala screening scheduled tomorrow at 9 p.m.

"People will still get to see my movie," Lejano said on Monday. "It's still part of the out-of-the-competition exhibition. I'm hoping that through word of mouth, people will come."

According to festival coordinator Nestor Jardin, that is, provided that Lejano is able to correct technical glitches, and that competition coordinator Laurice Guillen-Feleo approves the screening.

Rules

Jardin, also president of the CCP, said the festival's organizing committee, in a meeting on Saturday to discuss Lejano's case, decided to disqualify the filmmaker because of his failure to submit the film, as subtitled, on the July 20 deadline.

"Rules are rules," Jardin told INQUIRER Entertainment. "Ed understands that."

"Sinungaling na Buwan" tells of three dysfunctional characters who share the common experience of falling victim to a pattern of irony and lies.

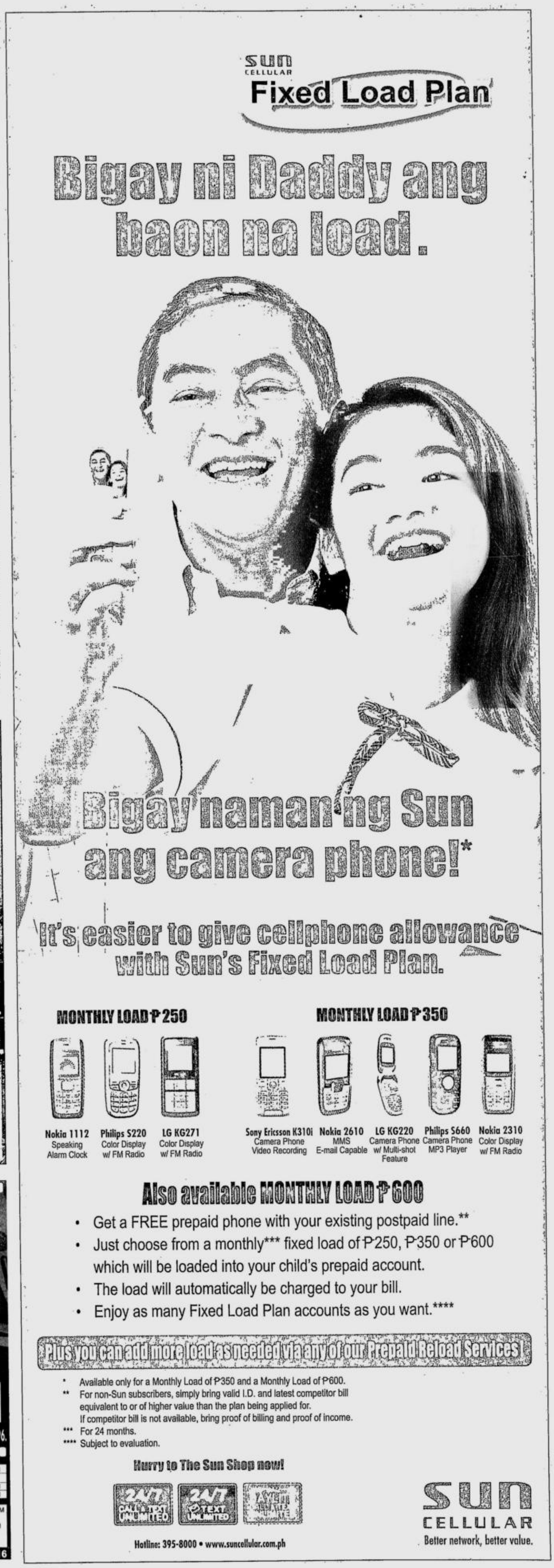
A farewell letter from their respective ex-lovers weaves together the stories of Myla (Kalila Aguilos), Dean (Jake Macapagal) and Carlo (JR Valentin).

ED LEJANO

Sad, but...

"I'm sad, but I'm looking at the bright side," said Lejano. "I know that there's a positive side to this. It's ironic, though. I've finished a film about dysfunctional people who become victims of lies. I now feel like I'm one of those characters."

The Cinemalaya festival runs until July 29, when the awards show will be staged at the CCP's Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo.



Guilty pleasures in the biz

VIEWFINDER
Nestor U. Torre

WHEN WE GET OUR REGULAR fix of entertainment, we go for productions that both delight and add to our emotional quotient, with an earned insight or two thrown in for good measure.

Once in a while, however, we throw all caution and standards to the wind and indulge in some "guilty pleasures" that add absolutely nothing to our psyche—and in fact could even detract from it!

That's what guilty pleasures are all about, right? They're a well-deserved vacation from sense and sensibility, acceptable standards of performance, and the productive use of one's time.

Why do we indulge in them? Because, as they feed a shallower and sillier part of us, they allow our more rigorous faculties to take a break—and thus achieve a sort of humbling and even liberating balance. Stuff that into your pop-philosophical pipe and smoke it.

At the top of our list of guilty pleasures is Bad Television. We're such TV addicts that we watch it all the time—all sorts of television, good, bad, indifferent, horrendously awful, etc. As long as the images move in that often appropriately called boob tube, we eyeball them—for hours on end.

Once, in graduate school, we watched TV for more than 24 hours straight! It was a perverse kind of education we got as we moved from late-late show to early-early programs, morning newscasts, women's shows, soaps, pop music shows, prime time series, documentaries, evening newscasts, late shows, all the way back to late-late shows, all over again—and beyond. What's beyond Bad Television? The Cosmic Curse, or worse.

Why do we watch bad TV? Because, like Mount Everest, it's there—and it's infinitely easier to tolerate the mediocre than to brave the bitter cold at the top of the world! Also, bad TV shows indicate how low some so-called entertainers and self-styled communicators can sink—which, given the exquisite imperfection of human nature, is *very*. Other guilty pleasures:

Old **Danny Kaye** movies. Kaye was the cosmically comic father of **Jerry Lewis**, who in turn begat **Robin Williams** and then **Jim Carrey**—over-the-top, physical comedians, four and all. Kaye, Lewis, Williams, Carrey—that's it, the family tree of physical comedy is complete!

Their local show biz counterparts, in the "guilty pleasures" sense of their comedic performances on TV and in the movies, would include **Chiquito, Andrew E, Pokwang, Bayani Agbayani, Tiya Pusit** and **Chokoleit**.

At the other end of the performing spectrum is the melodrama, and we certainly don't lack for lush exponents of that overly-emotional corruption of the dramatic mode.

Topping the list are all of our signature *contravidas*, led by the iconic **Bella Flores**, who has been making life miserable for many generations of hapless stars—all the way back to little **Tessie Agana** and **Boy Alano** in "Roberta" in the early 1950s, to her fresh batch of victims in the New Millennium.

And Bella has been doing it without skipping a beat—and without aging (much) to boot. Has the Queen of all *contravidas* found the Fountain of Youth in screen villainy? Hmm, perhaps Doctors Bello and Calayan should look into the Bella Flores phenomenon for its age-defying effect!

Other guilty pleasures in the biz: The gleefully "over" performances at different stages of their careers of: **Don Ameche, Judith Anderson, Liberace, Yul Brynner, Burt Lancaster, Joan Collins, Joan Crawford, Victor Mature, Theda Barra, Diana Dors, Boris Karloff, Klaus Kinski, Orson Welles, Marie Lanza, Peter Lorre, Bela Lugosi,**

Groucho Marx, Agnes Moorehead, Alla Nazimova, Dudley Moore, Leonard Nimoy, Ramon Novarro, Vincent Price, Anthony Quinn, George Raft, Martha Raye, Lucille Ball, Susan Hayward, Edward G. Robinson, Gilbert Roland, Mickey Rooney, Arnold Schwarzenegger,

Omar Sharif, Charles Bronson, Sylvester Stallone, Gloria Swanson, Ben Turpin, Rudolf Valentine, Mae West, Fay Wray—and **Liza Minnelli** today!

Brad Pitt

Playing a thief is getting to be a habit for **Brad Pitt**. After "Ocean's Thirteen," Pitt again plays it slyly larcenous in "The Assassination of Jesse James By the Coward Robert Ford," opening in October.

As James (Pitt) plans his next big robbery, he wages war on his enemies, who are trying to collect the reward money and glory riding on his capture—only to discover that the greatest thrust to his life may come from those he trusts the most!

'Mga Kuwentong Pambata'

The Francis Padua Papica Foundation is inviting students 9 to 12 years old to participate in the second Mga Kuwentong Pambata ng Papica Foundation National Short Story Writing Contest. This year's theme is "Bayani ng Bayan Ko (The Hero of My Town)." For details, e-mail fppifi@yahoo.com. Deadline is on Aug. 1.

'Dogeaters'

Jessica Hagedorn's acclaimed play, "Dogeaters," will be staged by Atlantic Productions at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Makati in November.

Fil-Am writer Hagedorn has transformed her best-selling novel about the Philippines during the Marcos dictatorship into an equally powerful theatrical piece that reaped acclaim at the New York Public Theater in 2001. **Bobby Garcia** directs.

OPENS AUG. 1
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
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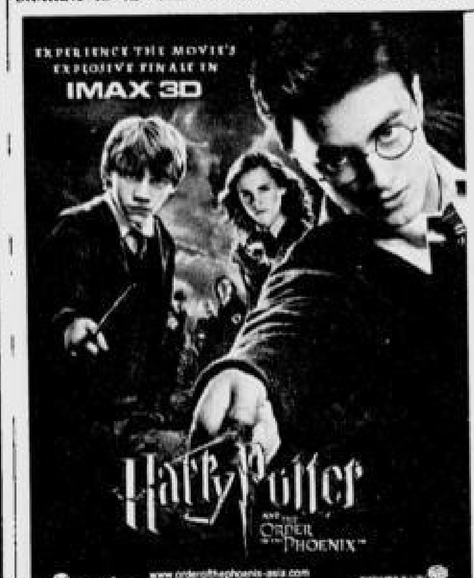

Don't miss the most anticipated movie event of the year!

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

Experience the movie's explosive finale in IMAX 3D at SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATRE

Tickets now available.
P 350 (Monday to Thursday, before 5pm)
P 400 (Monday to Thursday, 5pm onwards, Friday, Saturday & Sunday, Holiday whole day)
Please call 556-IMAX (4629) or 556 0242 for inquiries and reservations.

NOW SHOWING

SCREENING TIME	11:00 AM	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	8:00 PM	11:00 PM
JULY 25 WEDNESDAY	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
JULY 26 THURSDAY	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
JULY 27 FRIDAY	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
JULY 28 SATURDAY	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
MALL OF ASIA CINEMAS
1 RESERVED
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 DIE HARD 4
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 BLIND DATING
6 OUIJA

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TRANSFORMERS

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CINEMA 1
RATATOUILLE
CINEMA 2
HARRY POTTER 5
633-8976
For ticket reservation, dial 6338976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 RATATOUILLE
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 OUIJA
5 OUIJA
6 BLIND DATING
7 HARRY POTTER 5
8 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9 DIE HARD 4
10 VACANCY
11 HARRY POTTER 5
12 TRANSFORMERS

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 BLIND DATING
2 VACANCY
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 RATATOUILLE
6 TRANSFORMERS
7 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
8 PLANET TERROR
9 DIE HARD 4
10 OUIJA
11 WHITE NOISE
12 TIYANAKS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 BLIND DATING
2 TIYANAKS
3 WHITE NOISE
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 DIE HARD 4
6 THE SIMPSONS
7 RATATOUILLE
8 OUIJA
9 TRANSFORMERS
10 VACANCY
11 PLANET TERROR
12 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 OUIJA
6 PLANET TERROR
7 DIE HARD 4
8 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9 BLIND DATING
10 VACANCY

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 DIE HARD 4
6 OUIJA

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE
5 TRANSFORMERS
6 BLIND DATING
7 PLANET TERROR
8 DIE HARD 4
9 VACANCY

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 BLIND DATING
3 RATATOUILLE
4 DIE HARD 4
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 HARRY POTTER 5
7 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
8 PLANET TERROR
9 OUIJA
10 WHITE NOISE
11 TIYANAKS
12 VACANCY

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 THE SIMPSONS

movietime Event Calendar

Kids of all ages are invited to
Remy's Kitchen
A fun-filled activity for budding chefs
July 28 (Saturday)
at Mall of Asia Activity Area (near IMAX Theater)

Admission is free!
Participants are accepted on a first come, first served basis.
Sessions are at 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m., and 5:00 p.m.

Learn to be like Remy and Linguini in preparing mouth-watering desserts. Kids who prepared the best dessert will win special prizes.

See you there!

Special Thanks to:
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LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 BLIND DATING
2 WHITE NOISE
3 OUIJA
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 HARRY POTTER 5
6 RATATOUILLE
7 TRANSFORMERS
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 DIE HARD 4
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE
5 OUIJA
6 THE SIMPSONS

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 RATATOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 VACANCY

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 DIE HARD 4
4 RATATOUILLE
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 OUIJA

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 TRANSFORMERS

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 OUIJA
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 OUIJA
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 DIE HARD 4
3 OUIJA
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 RATATOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 ZODIAC
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA
5 HARRY POTTER 5
6 THE SIMPSONS
7 RESERVED
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 VACANCY
6 NEXT
7 OUIJA
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA

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MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

CINEPLEX
1 RATATOUILLE
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS 4.04.04.0
PREMIERE
HARRY POTTER - 5

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 RATATOUILLE
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 OUIJA
4 HARRY POTTER - 5

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA
5 RESERVED

metropolis star
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 RATATOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER - 5
4 PLANET TERROR

THEATRES
HARRY POTTER - 5
2 VACANCY
3 OUIJA

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 OUIJA
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 DIE HARD 4.0
5 OUIJA
6 HARRY POTTER - 5
7 RATATOUILLE
8 OUIJA
9 VACANCY
10 BLIND DATING

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Nino, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 OUIJA
2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3 RATATOUILLE
4 HARRY POTTER - 5

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 RATATOUILLE
2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3 OUIJA
4 BLIND DATING
5 DIE HARD 4.0

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 VACANCY
2 HARRY POTTER - 5
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 OUIJA
2 RATATOUILLE
3 HARRY POTTER - 5

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
2 RATATOUILLE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 HARRY POTTER - 5
2 OUIJA
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 DIE HARD 4.0
2 28 WEEKS LATER

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6163 or 72
1 RATATOUILLE
2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3 RATATOUILLE
4 HARRY POTTER - 5

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 RATATOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 VACANCY
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER - 5

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 VACANCY
2 OUIJA
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 HARRY POTTER - 5

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 HARRY POTTER - 5
2 OUIJA
3 RATATOUILLE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 HARRY POTTER - 5
2 OUIJA

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 PLEASE CALL
2 PLANET TRROR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 PLEASE CALL
2 PLANET TRROR
3 HARRY POTTER - 5
4 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 RATATOUILLE
2 PLEASE CALL
3 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
4 OUIJA
5 HARRY POTTER - 5

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 RATATOUILLE
2 VACANCY
3 OUIJA
4 HARRY POTTER - 5

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 KARELASYON
2 KAKAIBANG KARISMA

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'The Apprentice' celeb version won't include Rosie O'Donnell

CHEER FACTOR

DONALD TRUMP

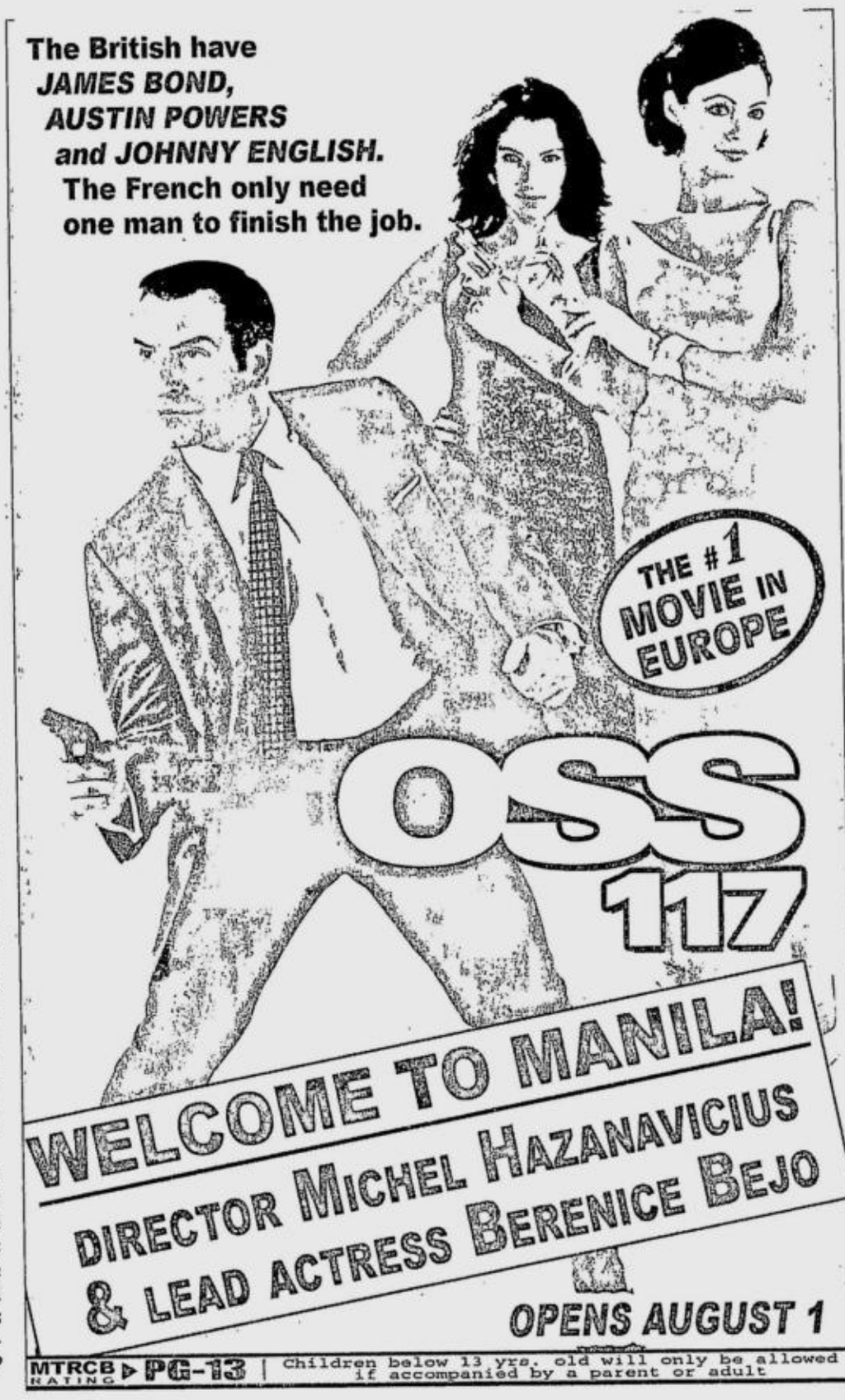
BEVERLY HILLS, CALifornia—NBC television is inviting celebrities to try to wow Donald Trump in the next version of "The Apprentice."

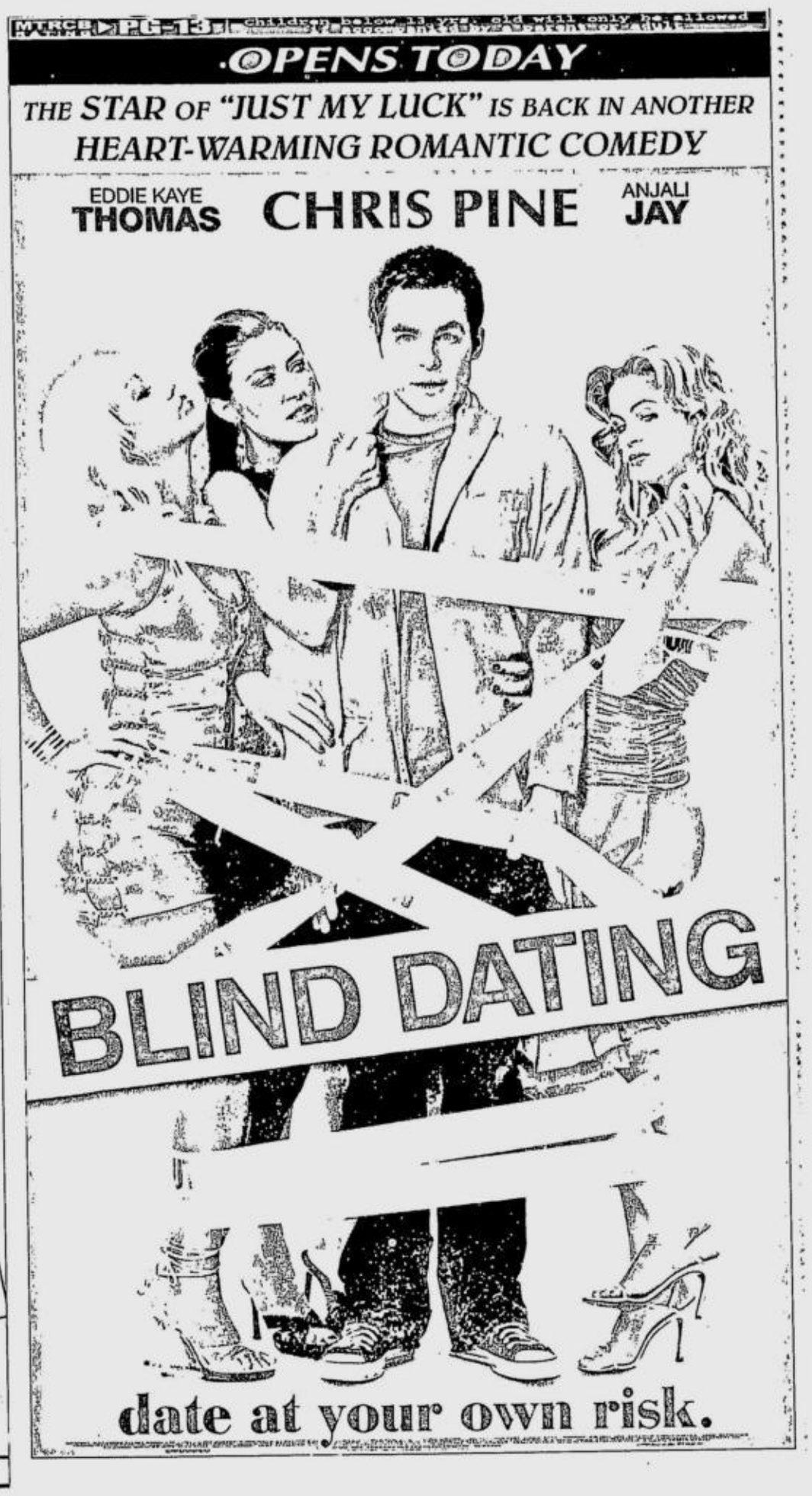
And while it would make for a marquee match-up, don't expect Rosie O'Donnell to be among them.

Trump and O'Donnell have feuded through various TV appearances, with O'Donnell mocking Trump's comb-over hair and Trump calling her fat, ugly and sad.

NBC had canceled "The Apprentice" due to low ratings. But the network hired Ben Silverman as its new entertainment chief shortly thereafter, and he called on Trump and executive producer Mark Burnett to revive the show.

No contestants were named in NBC's announcement. The network said it was looking for people with entrepreneurial abilities in the areas of sports, entertainment and fashion. *AP*





AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 VACANCY	2 THE SIMPSONS	3 RATATOUILLE	4 OUIJA
GLORIETTA 4	1 RATATOUILLE	2 BLIND DATING	3 THX THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 DIE HARD 4.0	5 THE SIMPSONS	6 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	7 OUIJA
GREENBELT 1	1 TRANSFORMERS	2 THE SIMPSONS		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BLIND DATING GUARANTEED SEATS	5 RATATOUILLE GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE SIMPSONS	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX		
	3 RATATOUILLE	4 THE SIMPSONS	5 OUIJA	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE SIMPSONS	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	3 RATATOUILLE	4 OUIJA
MARKET! MARKET!	1 OUIJA	2 THE SIMPSONS		
	3 RATATOUILLE	4 DIE HARD 4.0	5 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	
TRINOMA	1 OUIJA	2 DIE HARD 4.0	3 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 BLIND DATING	6 RATATOUILLE	7 THX THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	

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AT THE MALLS

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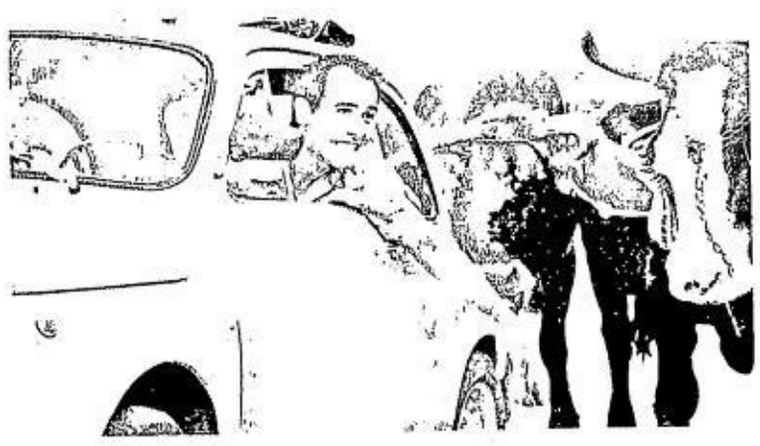
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala

Glorietta	Mechanical Imago July 27 to 29, 2007 at the Activity Center
Greenbelt	Shop & Travel at Greenbelt 1 Promo Get a chance to win exciting prizes and a trip for two to Boracay for every P300 worth of purchase at any Greenbelt 1 establishment from July 1 to September 30, 2007
Alabang Town Center	Clear Mall Animation Activation July 28 & 29, 2007 at the Activity Center
Ayala Center Cebu	Ciba Vision Exhibit July 27 to 29, 2007 at Paseos
Market! Market!	Metro Fashion Week July 13 to 31, 2007 at participating Metro departments
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala Museum	KANDUNGAN - a solo exhibition of metal sculptures by Daniel dela Cruz July 24 to August 6, 2007 For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
Tri Noma	Magic 89.9's Amped on the Ramp July 27, 2007 at the Activity Center Mechanical Imago August 3 to 5, 2007 at the Activity Center

Glorietta · Greenbelt · Alabang Town Center · Ayala Center Cebu · Market! Market! · TriNoma



Brand-new season of 'Dolce Vita 3' premieres August 2

CLICK!

VIEWERS CAN CATCH THE PREMIERE OF "David Rocco's Dolce Vita 3" on Discovery Travel & Living on Thursday, Aug. 2, 8:30 to 9 p.m. (encore Monday at 10:30 p.m.).

In 13 brand-new episodes of the popular series shot on location in Florence, Sicily and the Amalfi coast of Italy, Canadian-born Italian David Rocco cooks up classic, easy-to-learn dishes for friends and family.

He heads south, this time to explore the regional cuisine in Sicily.

He visits the famous Palermo markets, taking viewers into the real heart of the beautiful city.

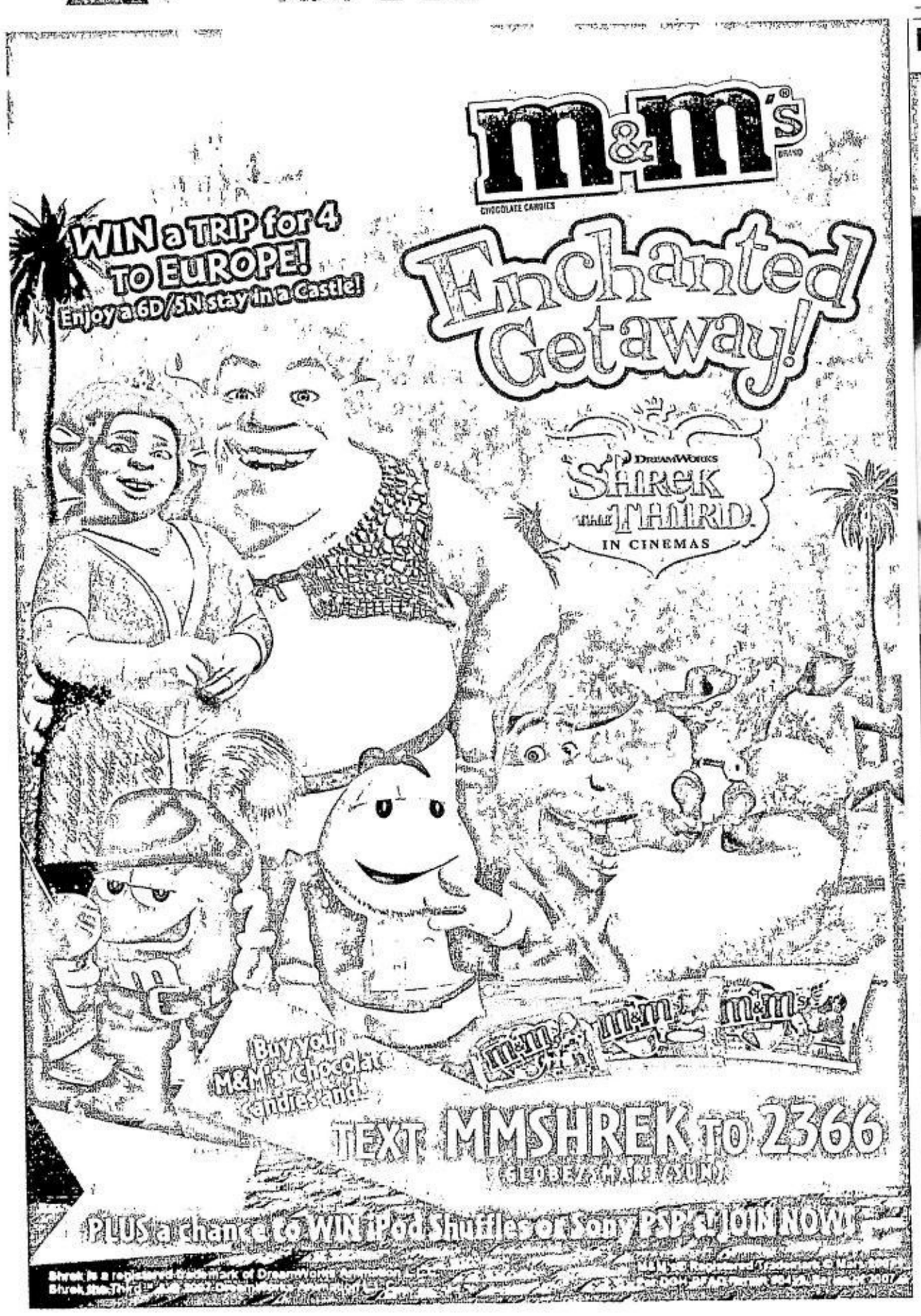
As he hits the countryside, he explores authentic rustic Sicilian cuisine, based on seasonal local ingredients.

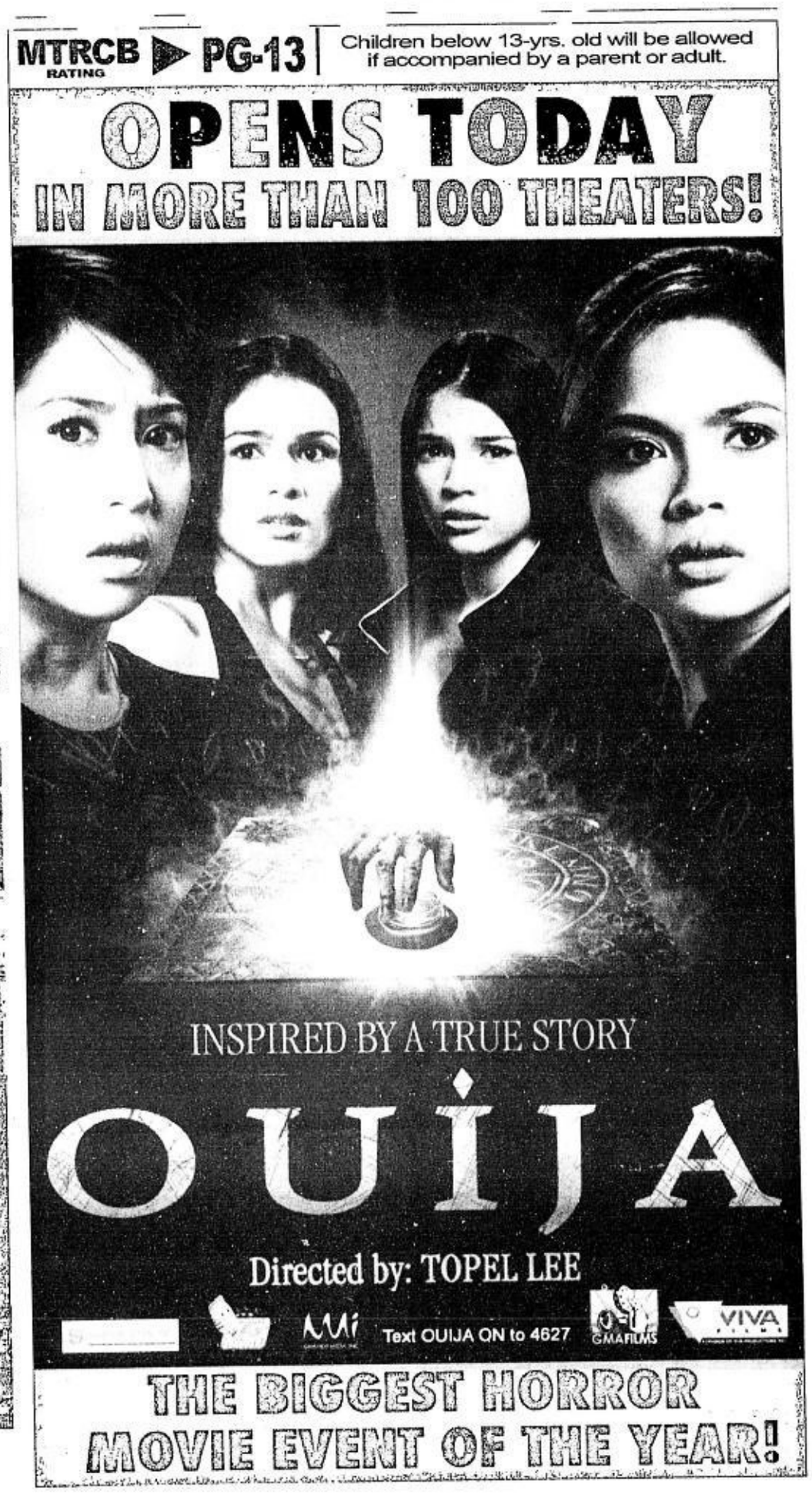
Nuttier Saturdays

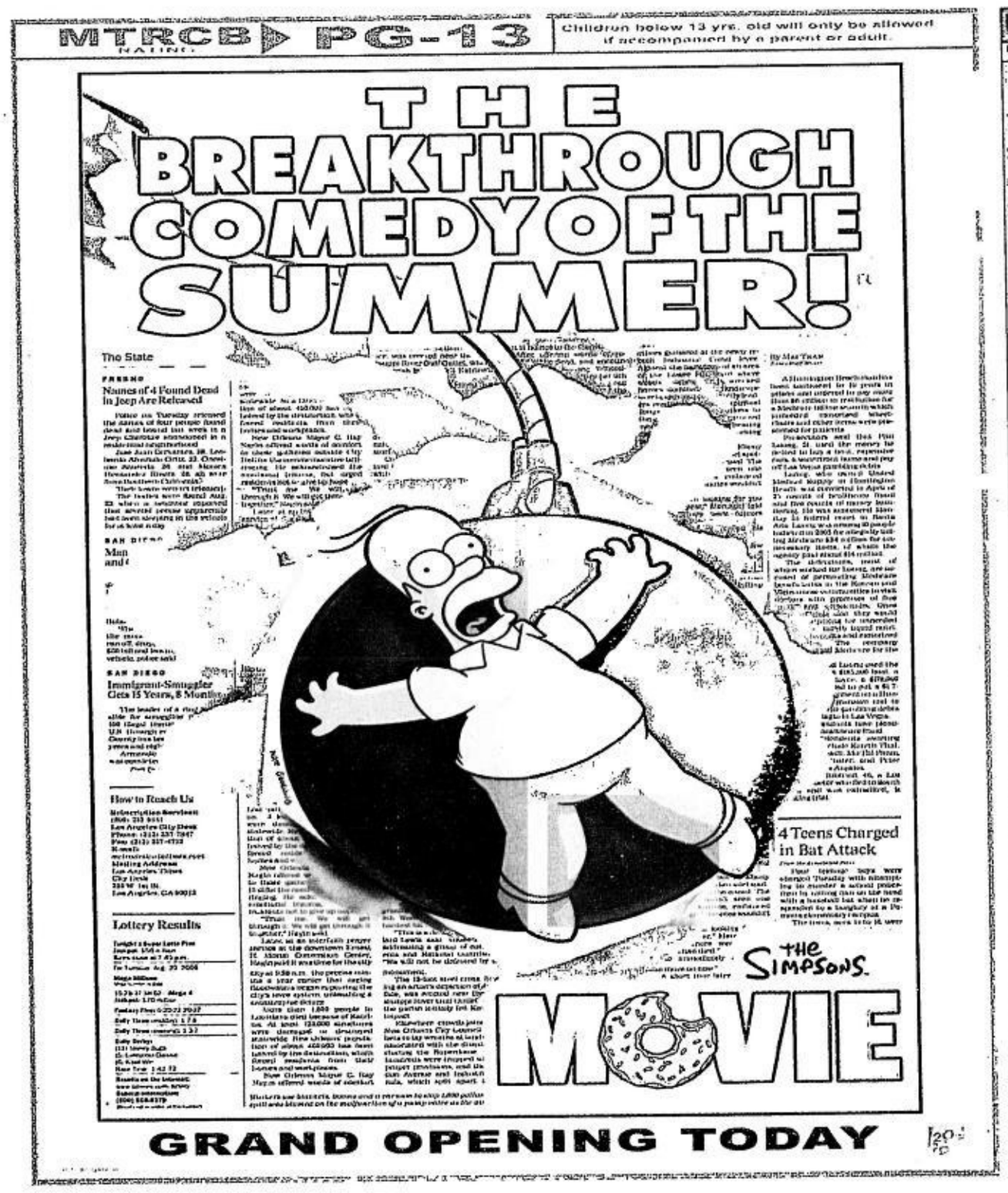
"Nuts Entertainment" moves to its new time slot on Saturdays, after "Imbestigador."

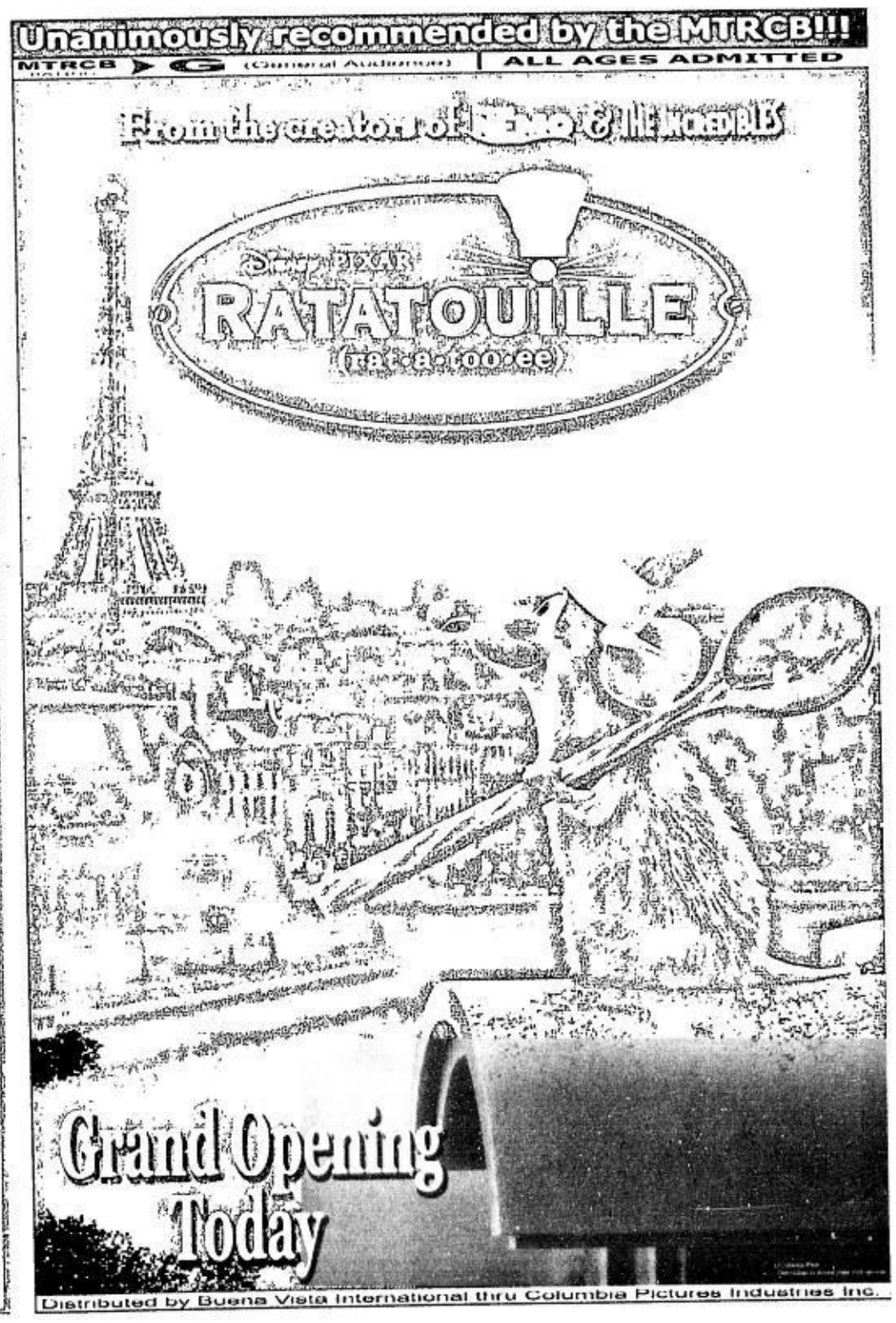
GMA Network's comedy program welcomes its newest "Nuts" playmate of the season, Ehra Madrigal.

The show features "Nuts" cast Joey de Leon, Janno Gibbs, Anjo Yllana, Richard Gutierrez, Alfred Vargas, Mike "Pekto" Nacua, John Feir and Iwa Moto.









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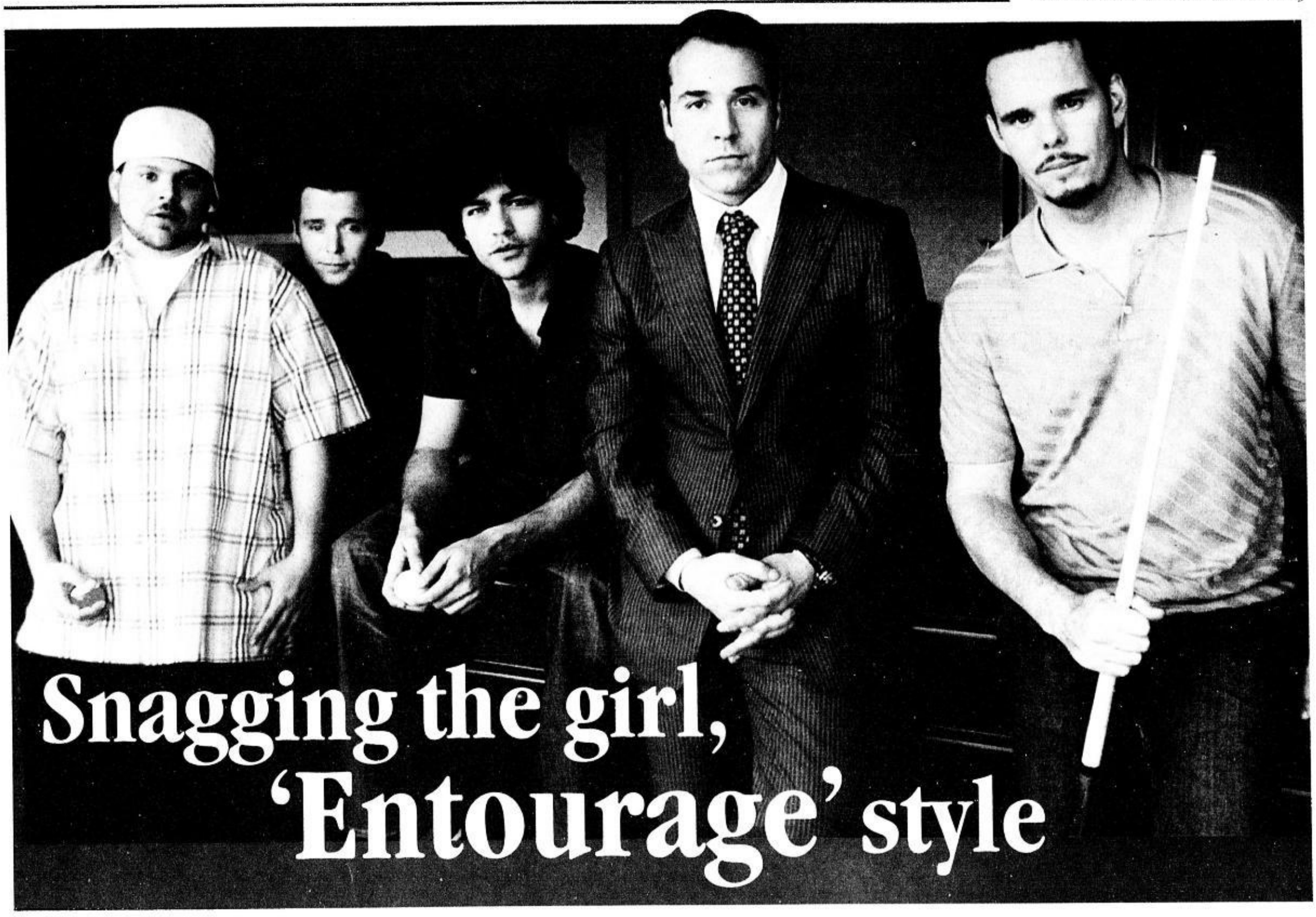

Snagging the girl, 'Entourage' style

WOMEN ARE never a problem with the boys of "Entourage." They sure get their fair share. Followers of the HBO series can learn from them, with this pocketbook of tips—on how to snag the girls of their dreams—polished through years of hits and misses ... er, experience:

VINCE CHASE (Adrien Grenier): "When she's talking, don't interrupt."

1) Never work too hard to get a girl's attention.

Desperation only results in avoidance. Before you go running up to her, make sure she's looking at you with "those eyes." Unless you're blind, you'll know it when you see it. Then when you chat her up, keep her attention by making eye contact—with her eyes, not her breasts. And always bring a pen with you to take her number down!

2) If necessary, use your friends shamelessly.

Try the "Wingman" maneuver on her. Send your buddy out to the girl to make a real ass of himself. Then you walk over to save the day! Apologize to the lady, pull him back to the group and then ask for her number later. Works every time—well, almost. Of course, don't send a Wingman who looks better than you!

3) Watch for danger signs.

Nothing kills your street "cred" and reputation like a psycho girlfriend. Danger signs are all over the place, but they can be subtle. Check out her history before you do anything. Six degrees of separation, remember? A bartender makes the best informant (don't scrimp, slip him a crisp bill). Even better if you know her exboyfriends!

4) Think like a girl.

The more you can empathize with a woman, the closer you will be to winning her unconditional love. Feel her pain, become one with her and respond intensely to show that you truly "dig" her. Even if she knows you're pretending, the effort is still a whole lot more than what most guys attempt. Nod your head regularly and say, "Uh-huh," while you take in her words.

ERIC (Kevin Connolly): "Say something to show who you are on the inside."

5) Don't be embarrassed to show affection.

Show your sensitive side to both women and men friends. The ladies are often impressed at how constant you are, that you don't distinguish between the genders when it comes to really connecting. If hugging is not your thing, find some other less intrusive manner to display your affection. Try placing a hand on your guy friend's shoulder when you ask him how he's doing.

ARI GOLD (Jeremy Piven): "If you've got it, flaunt it. Women check the goods, too."

6) Never ever have break-up sex.

It ain't over till it's over. Sex of any kind with an emotional bond leaves you craving for more. Worse, having sex to say goodbye is confusing—your brain says, "It's over" but your body says, "I still want." Change your number and don't tell her about it. Then delete hers from your phone

7) Listen to a girl like there was no one else left on the planet.

If you didn't take acting classes, just remember this: Let her finish! It doesn't matter how long she goes on for, or in how many ways she repeats herself. Just don't interrupt. Put a mint in your mouth if you feel like talking. The more goes in, the more you will want to stop talking.

8) Speak intelligently.

It's not the size of your crotch. It's the other head that matters—the big one! And there's no bigger turnoff than a blabbering man without substance. Foreplay for a woman begins the moment she hears you say something intelligent. What happens after depends on how big a star you are in bed! Read. For heaven's sake—just do it!

9) Don't let insecurity destroy your chances.

It's natural to protect yourself from getting hurt. But denying your feelings and treating someone you're attracted to badly so you won't be hurt by her is just silly. Learn to accept pain as a part of pleasure and you'll quickly grasp the meaning of true love. Go to the self-help section of a bookstore and look for titles like, "Defensive Mechanisms of the Sub-Conscious."

TURTLE (Jerry Ferrera): "It's not the size of your crotch that matters."

10) Show your figure.

If you've got it, flaunt it. They may do it subtly but they do check out the goods. If you know you don't have a supermodel face or personality, then use your body. There's nothing like lustful temptation to draw the attention to yourself. Get a gym membership—and use it!

11) Sell yourself, if you must.

Ever wondered why they say, "Good guys always come in last"? That's because you don't do anything to sell yourself. No one's asking you to be a blabbermouth but at least say something to show who you are on the inside. Mind reading is not a common gift among us normal people! Practice voicing your opinions after every newspaper article you read.

DRAMA (Kevin Dillon): "Feel her pain."

12) Don't be a wise ass.

You don't have to retort to everything said to you. If you're smart, save it for the classroom, not the bar. A quiet genius always trumps a loud "schmuck," so say what you need to say poignantly and always use wit to charm, not to irritate. Try watching every James Bond flick available.

The third season of this hit HBO comedy series, based loosely on the Hollywood experiences of its executive producer, Mark Wahlberg, comes to Asian television on Monday, July 30, at 10 p.m. on HBO Signature, SkyCable, and at 11 p.m. on HBO.

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Mitch takes old pals to Captain's Bar show

MITCH VALDES RETURNS FOR ANother series of gigs at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati, on July 28, Aug. 4 and 11.

Titled "The Best of Mitch Valdes," the show will have a special segment featuring the singer's friends at various points in her music career—Boy Camara, Nanett Inventor, Nonie Buencamino and Cherie Gil.

Camara and Valdes co-starred in the 1970 production of "Jesus Christ Superstar," while Inventor, Buencamino and Gil were Valdes' colleagues in the theater.

Show starts 8:30 p.m. For reservations or inquiries, call 750-8888 or 899-3108.

SHOW TIME

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Instrumental Nite at **RJTV Bar.** Call 899-1658

Maegan Aguilar with Blush at UCC Park Cafe, Glorietta

Richard Merk and Friends at Merk's Bar

The Bloomfields at Fuente Circle, Eastwood City

Tomorrow

The Members at Fuente Circle, Eastwood City

July 27

The Dawn at Eastwood City Central Plaza

The CompanY at Metrobar, 8 p.m. Call 911-5555

MITCH VALDES

July 31

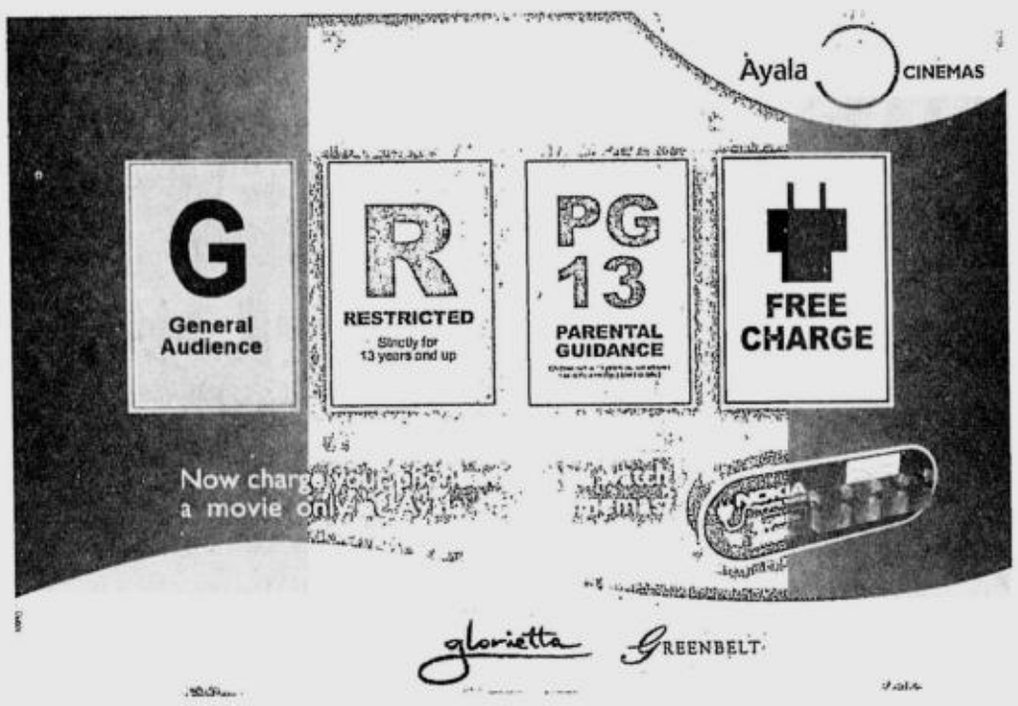
Richard Poon at Fuente Circle, Eastwood City

Reunited

RJFM 100.3's The Greatest and the Latest Concert Series presents "RJ & Nyoy Reunited" featuring Ramon Jacinto and Nyoy Volante tomorrow at the Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

WITHOUT RICO

Rivermaya is holding auditions for a new singer, post-Rico Blanco. Meanwhile, the band played its first gig without Rico recently at SaGuijo in Makati. Sugarfree's Ebe Dancel, center, took turns with brother Vin (formerly of Twisted Halo) jamming on old Rivermaya hits.



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3 RATATOUILLE 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00
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DID YOU KNOW...

US president next year will be a woman

BEVERLY HILLS, California—The United States will have a female president next year—on the Fox TV series "24."

Tony Award-winning actress Cherry Jones will play President Allison Taylor when the show about the exploits of counterterrorism agent Jack Bauer (Kiefer Sutherland) returns in January for season seven, the network announced Sunday.

Jones' term will coincide with Democratic Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's presidential bid, but Fox Entertainment Chair Peter Liguori said there will be no intersection between fiction and real-world politics.

Dramatic

"It's a dramatic decision. ... The president is a very important piece of '24,'" Liguori told The Associated Press. "We've had a broad array of presidents on the show; why not a female president?"

The series has been an Oval Office groundbreaker before, with Dennis Haysbert playing President Palmer, the first black president.

Jones, winner of best-actress Tony Awards for "The Heiress" and "Doubt," has appeared in films including "Ocean's Twelve" and "The Perfect Storm" and has guest-starred on TV shows including the White House drama "The West Wing."

Liguori and newly appointed Fox programming chief Kevin Reilly appeared Sunday at the summer meeting of the Television Critics Association to discuss the upcoming TV season on Fox, owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation. *AP*

Bye to hobbits, hi to kung fu

HONG KONG—THE HOBBITS DEFEATED savage Orcs to protect Middle Earth from the evil Sauron. Now kung fu fighters and samurai warriors have taken their place.

Or to put it another way, "The Lord of the Rings" movie trilogy revitalized New Zealand's cinema industry, but now that the huge production is over, the country's filmmakers are looking to Asia to keep their business growing.

They've succeeded in luring producers from mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and South Korea to either shoot in their scenic country or use its editing facilities, and they're pushing hard to get more business from Asia.

"New Zealand and the country's screen infrastructure generally are focusing more and more on East Asia," said Susan Ord, projects manager at Film New Zealand, the country's location coordination office.

Sheer economic force

The New Zealand industry's drive to tap investments from its northern neighbors partly stems from the volatility of Hollywood investment. "Rings" was a sheer economic force, with shooting taking place over 15 months in 1999-2000 and special effects work taking longer, but its departure left a major void.

Production financing in New Zealand surged from $146 million in 1998 to $402 million in 2001 in part due to the shoot, according to industry figures.

When the "Rings" work was over, production financing in New Zealand plummeted $176 million in 2004. It then went back up to $433 million in 2005—in part thanks to "Rings" director Peter Jackson's next big Hollywood production, "King Kong."

Hong Kong director John Woo was expected to spend more than $80 million on his ancient Chinese epic "Red Cliff."

The Japanese samurai movie "Dororo" was shot in the New Zealand town of Methven. South Korean director Kim Sung-ho scouted locations in the country for his movie "Together." The Park Road Post film editing lab in Wellington, owned by Jackson of "Rings" fame, is editing the Chinese movie "Big Water" and is in talks to handle three other films.

Keep going out there

Matt Aiken of Weta Digital, which won Oscars for its "Rings" visual effects and worked on Hong Kong director Tsui Hark's kung fu epic "Seven Swords," said the company bids on projects in both Asia and the US.

"You've got to keep going out there and look for more work," he said.

Locations coordinator Ord said Asian filmmakers are more likely to take their work to New Zealand these days because they have more money at their disposal and often write modern stories that can be shot abroad—as opposed to period movies set in ancient temples and palaces.

Production coordinator Cameron Bennett says Japanese TV stations like to shoot scenes set in Western locations in New Zealand because it's cost-effective, noting his country's landscapes have doubled for Russia and Pakistan.

Bennett said while the arrival of big Hollywood productions has pushed movie crew wages higher, they remain reasonable.

Good experience with US

Singapore movie executive Daniel Yun agrees, saying that while the wages are now higher than in Asia, "it's still something that's tenable for us." The company Yun manages, MediaCorp Raintree Pictures, just shot "The Tattooist" in Auckland.

Yun also noted that while some companies are used to Hollywood-scale work, others are still willing to accommodate smaller budgets.

Asian filmmakers, however, also appreciate that New Zealand's film work has been upgraded by its experience with American productions.

"On any one set, someone's been on all the big 'Lord of the Rings' movies," said Bennett, the production coordinator. "They've all had experience with those big budget movies. It definitely ups their level of skills." *AP*

STEPHEN CHOW in "Kung Fu Hustle"

SEAN Astin and Elijah Wood as the famous cinema hobbits

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3 RATATOUILLE MTRCB GP 1:00, 3:40
2 THE SIMPSONS MTRCB PG-13 12:00 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
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MANY ELEMENTS IN THIS MOVIE ARE BASED ON REAL FACTS

WEEKEND BOX OFFICE

Top 10 movies at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning July 20

I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry, Universal Studios

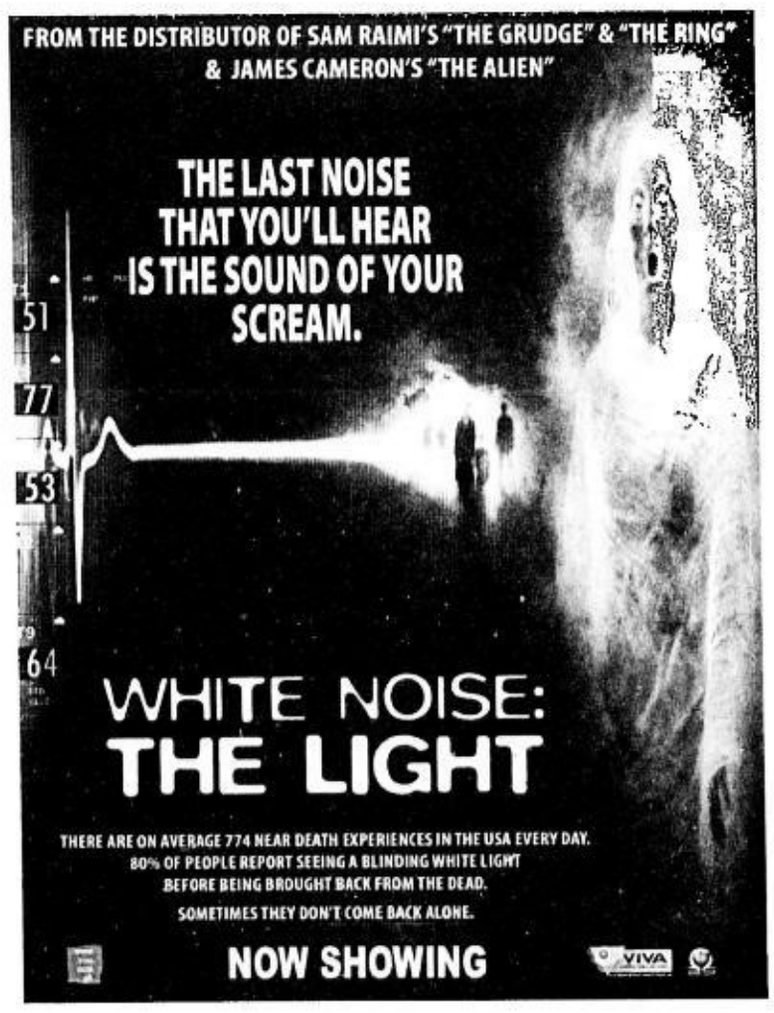
TW	LW	Title	Gross	WR
1	☆	I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry	$ 34.8 mln	1
2	1	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	$ 32.2 mln	2
3	☆	Hairspray	$ 27.8 mln	1
4	2	Transformers	$ 20.5 mln	3
5	3	Ratatouille	$ 11.0 mln	4
6	4	Live Free or Die Hard	$ 7.3 mln	4
7	5	License to Wed	$ 3.8 mln	3
8	6	1408	$ 2.6 mln	5
9	7	Evan Almighty	$ 2.5 mln	5
10	8	Knocked Up	$ 2.3 mln	8

This Week, Last Week — *Weeks in Release*

☆ New release

Based on studio estimates compiled on Sunday

REUTERS



Kapuso exec on Angel: We made her a star

RUSHES ANGEL LOCSIN

GMA 7 EXECUTIVE WILMA GALVANTE ON Angel Locsin making the big move: "We are shocked and saddened that Angel and her manager treated us this way. [Angel] could've been truthful about her plans. We nurtured her and made her a star. I hope she finds peace in her decision."

Earlier, Angel, through her manager Becky Aguila, announced she was not renewing her contract with the Kapuso network. The actress' father, Angel Colmenares, told the INQUIRER that he and Aguila were negotiating with ABS-CBN.

***

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed the weekend's TV show biz programs:

• Becky said Angel's contract with GMA 7 expired on March 31, which makes her talent a freelancer now.

• "We owe the [Kapuso] network Angel's popularity," Aguila told "The Buzz" host Boy Abunda. "*Nagkatulungan naman sila.* Angel did everything the network wanted."

(Last year, Angel and Becky fought over finances. Now, Becky has only good things to say about her ward.)

• "She's very hardworking. *Matipid s'ya. Hindi mahilig gumimik.* Ever since ... *wala akong narinig na reklamo.*"

(And some about herself, too.)

• "I'm not just Angel's manager but also her second mother."

• Angel's dad was less taciturn: "*Tapos na ang kontrata.* In her five years with GMA 7 she helped the network in her own way."

For real?

• Are they just playing their parts, or are Dingdong Dantes and Marian Rivera really smitten with each other? The two are portraying the lovers Sergio and Marimar in the local version of the Mexican hit series, on GMA 7. They had these to say about each other on "Showbiz Central":

• Dingdong: "*Nakakadala si* Marian—*ang* energy *n'ya, ang* beauty *n'ya.*"

• Marian: "*Nung unang nakita ko si Dong, nasabi ko,* 'Wow!' *Iba si* Dong."

(Hello, Karylle?)

Getting into it

• How is Iza Calzado preparing for her Hollywood movie? "*Pag wala sa harap ng* camera, English *nang* English," she told "Showbiz Central" host John Lapus.

• For the first time in almost three years, the Barretto sisters Gretchen, Marjorie and Claudine were publicly seen together. This happened when the three posed for snapshots with Claudine's newborn, Santino, at the hospital last week.

• A weepy Pops Fernandez appeared on "The Buzz" to air her side of the story involving Robin and Ram, her children with Martin Nievera, and Martin's current partner Katrina Ojeda. Pops insisted that she supports Martin's decision to have another child with a different partner, provided that Martin "makes sure our kids are treated fairly." Pops said she was so mad at Martin (ring a bell?) that she turned down the offer on the Sunday show "ASAP" to do a production number with her ex.

POPS FERNANDEZ

***

Cast of 'Desperadas'

Final cast of "Desperadas": Rufa Mae Quinto, Marian Rivera, Ruffa Gutierrez and Iza Calzado.

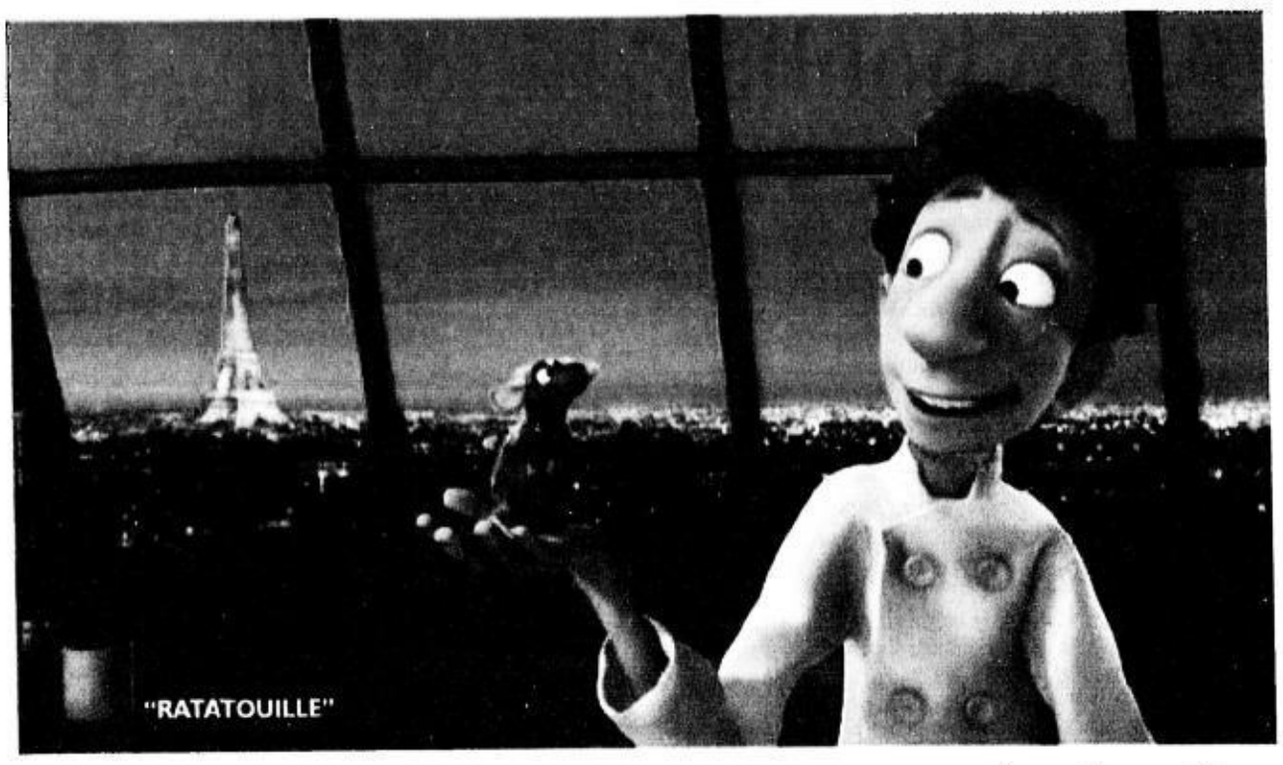
Marian Rivera seems to be the new favorite of Regal's Mother Lily Monteverde. Marian has been cast as one of Maricel Soriano's children in Regal's other MMFF entry, "Bahay Kubo," a dramatic-comic update of "All Mine to Give."

Not this one

If Marian is the current apple of Mother Lily's eyes, Jennylyn Mercado seems to have fallen out of favor. Jennylyn is no longer in the cast of "Bahay Kubo," and has moved to another MMFF entry, Imus/Ignite's sci-fi adventure, "Resiklo."

SALLY FIELD listens during a panel discussion for the ABC show "Brothers and Sisters" at Outfest 07, Los Angeles gay and lesbian Film Festival, at the Directors Guild Of America in LA last Saturday. REUTERS

TELEVISION personality Tammy Faye Messner wipes a tear during an exclusive interview with CNN talk show host Larry King. She announced her recent diagnosis of inoperable lung cancer. REUTERS



"RATATOUILLE"

Delectable animated dish

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

GREAT CULINARY EXPERTISE AND rodents make a strange but exemplary combination in "Ratatouille" (pronounced rahtah-toowee), the latest from Pixar Animation Studios and director Brad Bird ("The Incredibles"). The cartoon movie is an exceptionally stylish adventure that's colorful and kinetic enough to grab kids' undivided attention, while smoothly imparting nuggets of wisdom and drama that grownups can appreciate.

The nearly two-hour "Ratatouille" has its own distinct spin on the "man versus beast" and "live your dreams" concepts, a solidly crafted film that challenges traditional notions about art and substance as it entertains.

It's primarily the tale of a cultured rat, Remy (voiced by Patton Oswalt), whose gift for discerning the ingredients of food eventually lands him the job of being his pack's poison-sniffer. But Remy has loftier ambitions, apart from a sublime talent for cooking.

A botched food run separates him from his family and friends, and he later finds himself scampering around the legendary restaurant of his long-deceased chef idol Auguste Gusteau. The plucky young rodent is hopeful that this momentous discovery comes with limitless possibilities.

Soon enough, he does get the chance to create a tasty masterpiece.

The restaurant's new garbage boy, Linguini (voiced by Lou Romano), secretly concocts his own soup recipe behind the chefs' backs. But he's terrible at it, so Remy sneaks in and fixes the soup, which instantly delights a visiting food critic!

Linguini and Remy soon form a secret partnership. Like a puppet master pulling strings, the rat tugs at the man's hair, which gives him "control" of the human's movements. This symbiosis is especially useful when the talentless Linguini is hired as the new, supposedly genius cook, while Remy monitors things from inside the guy's hat.

The animation is typically smooth when it comes to movements, the stylized figures offering a rich variation of textures and expressions. The script also delightfully complements the characters' visual expressiveness.

It's rare that such an animated film is able to find a genuine and steady working relationship between its reaction-inducing components and its periodically malleable denizens. As a result, the characters tread the line between believability and welcome unreality, suiting this world of coexisting human and animal dreamers just fine.

So the characters here aren't the cookie-cutter cornballs from some half-baked digitally made cartoon. You effortlessly believe that confidence and dedication are important for Remy, as well as for Collette (Janeane Garofalo), the lone female chef in the team. Fiercely competitive but willing to trust the new, clueless recruit, she profoundly shares her valuable work ethics and experiences because she honestly wants Linguini to succeed.

Memorable perspective

Another such pivotal character, the grim food critic Anton Ego (Peter O'Toole), is the harbinger of doom, a harsh but otherwise substantial figure who offers a memorable, truthful and wise perspective on criticism and appreciation later in the movie.

"Ratatouille" is also about pursuing and loving one's profession, and steadfastly speaks of sharing and believing in oneself despite his humble, scavenger origins. Remy the rodent is all about good taste, and he can surely teach humans a thing or two about it.

Springfield is home, sweet Homer

SPRINGFIELD, VERMONT—ROLLING out the yellow carpet, the honorary "hometown" of Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie Simpson played host over the weekend to the premiere of "The Simpsons Movie," with creator Matt Groening among thousands who turned out to toast the debut.

The film's producers were also in the crowd celebrating the TV cartoon family's first full-length film in a town with the same name as the fictional home of the Simpson family.

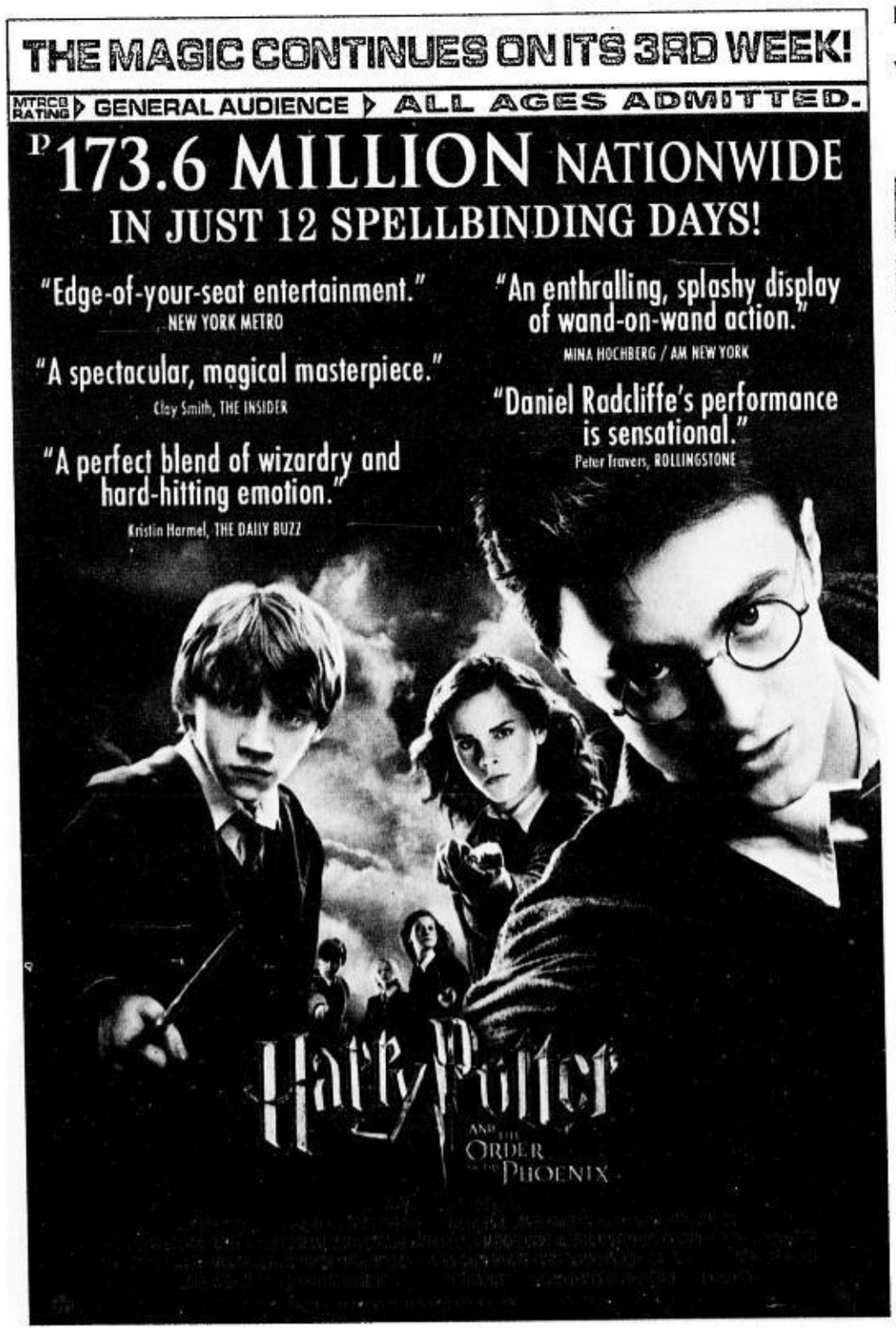
Vermont' Springfield got the most votes in an online USA Today poll and earned the right to host the event, beating out competing Springfields in Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon and Tennessee.

Officials for Vermont's Springfield, a city of about 9,300 that was originally uninvited, lobbied to be included in the contest and then won it, in part on the strength of a homemade video in which Homer—played by a local talk-show host—runs through town chasing a big, pink, rolling doughnut before he gets chased into a movie theater by a mob of people.

Vermont's Springfield got 15,367 votes, edging out Springfield, Illinois, which drew 14,634.

On Saturday, streets were closed off, costumed Simpsons look-alikes walked through the crowds and blue-haired fans vied for tickets to one of four showings of the movie at the 212-seat Springfield Theater, the first of which was by invitation only.

Groening said in a short ceremony before the first showing: "As Homer would say, 'Woo-hoo!'" AP



OPENING TODAY

Hanggang Dito na Lamang at Maraming Salamat

Stars Nonie Buencamino, Jon Santos, Jerwin Mercado
Directed by Lino Tañada

Based on an Orlando Nadres play and a classic in the gay lit canon, this digital feature showcases the unlikely friendship between a closet gay and a flamboyant drag queen. Says Nestor Torre of the INQUIRER: "This abiding gem of Philippine theater is now a movie, thanks to the initiative and resourcefulness of its director." Torre points out that Tañada "should be complimented for his knack for 'perfect' casting." Says the director: "Great, underrated actors like Nonie and Jon hardly need direction. Jon's comic timing is impeccable and Nonie's characterization, touching." Exclusively in IndieSine, Robinsons Galleria.

Ratatouille

With the voices of Patton Oswalt, Ian Holm, Will Arnett, Brian Dennehy, Janeane Garofalo
Directed by Brad Bird

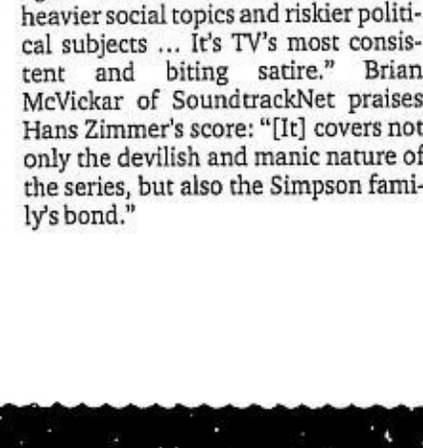
A rat dreams of becoming a gourmet chef in Paris, the world's haute cuisine capital. Justin Chang of Variety raves: "[It's] delicious. The master chefs at Pixar have blended all the right ingredients: abundant verbal and visual wit, genius slapstick timing ... to produce a warm and irresistible concoction." David Ansen of Newsweek agrees: "[It's] as rich as a sauce béarnaise, as refreshing as a raspberry sorbet, and a lot less predictable than the critics' food metaphors and adjectives." Lou Lumenick of New York Post concurs: "Gratifying ... [it's] a plea against mediocrity and a reminder that genius can turn up in the unlikeliest places." See full review, this page.

Blind Dating

Stars Chris Pine, Eddie Kaye Thomas, Anjali Jay
Directed by James Keach

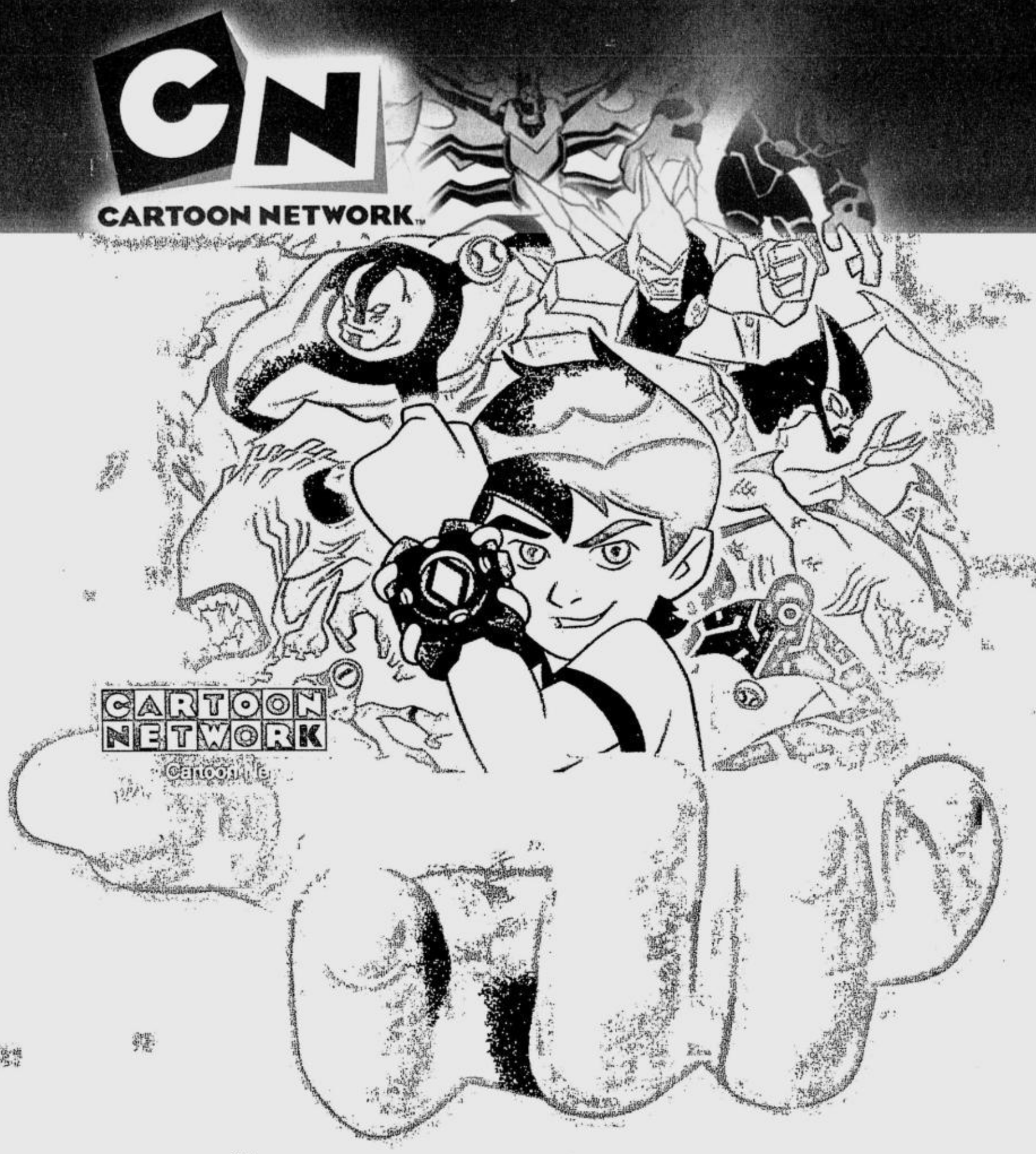
A virginal blind guy (Pine) falls for an Indian girl (Jay) who is betrothed to another man. Bruce Westbrook of Houston Chronicle opines that "it's not preachy or weepy ... a lively yet meaningful romantic comedy that ... entertains." Sean P. Means of The Salt Lake Tribune states that "the script aims for 'American Pie' raunch ... [and] the director benefits from the nice chemistry between lead stars Pine and Jay." Jim Hemphill of Reel.com describes it as "sweet and entertaining ... thanks to two strong lead performances and its essential good cheer. [The filmmakers] have obvious affection for their characters."

The Simpsons Movie



With the voices of Dan Castellaneta, Julie Kavner, Nancy Cartwright, Hank Azaria
Directed by David Silverman

"America's favorite jaundiced family" on television crosses over to the big screen. Matt Groening, the series' creator, tells Premiere.com that the plot "involves love and the end of the world. [It] has a political component." Josh Tyler of Cinemablend.com comments that although "the movie is at least 10 years too late ... 'The Simpsons' has managed to remain relevant, tackling heavier social topics and riskier political subjects ... It's TV's most consistent and biting satire." Brian McVickar of SoundtrackNet praises Hans Zimmer's score: "[It] covers not only the devilish and manic nature of the series, but also the Simpson family's bond."



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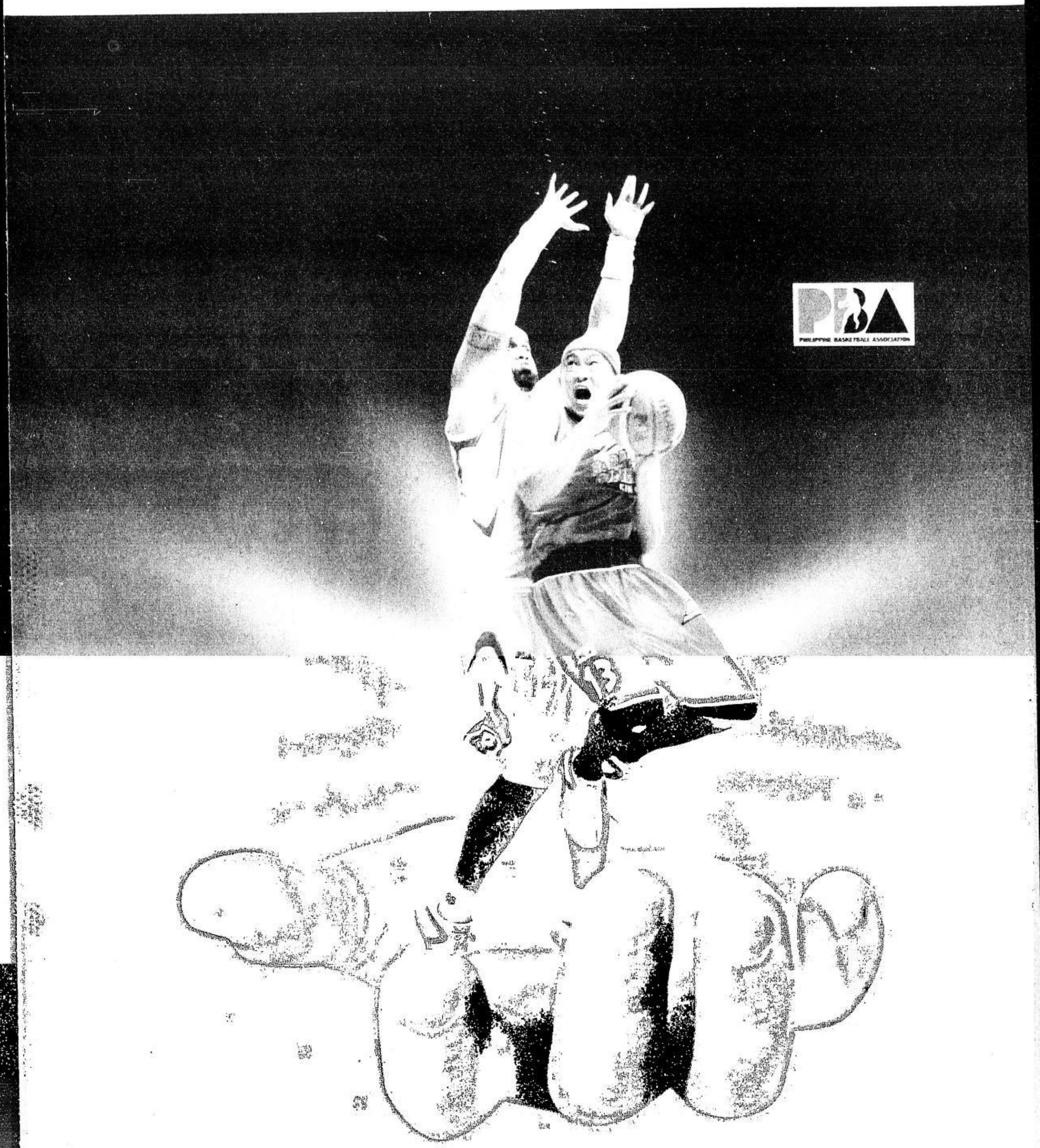

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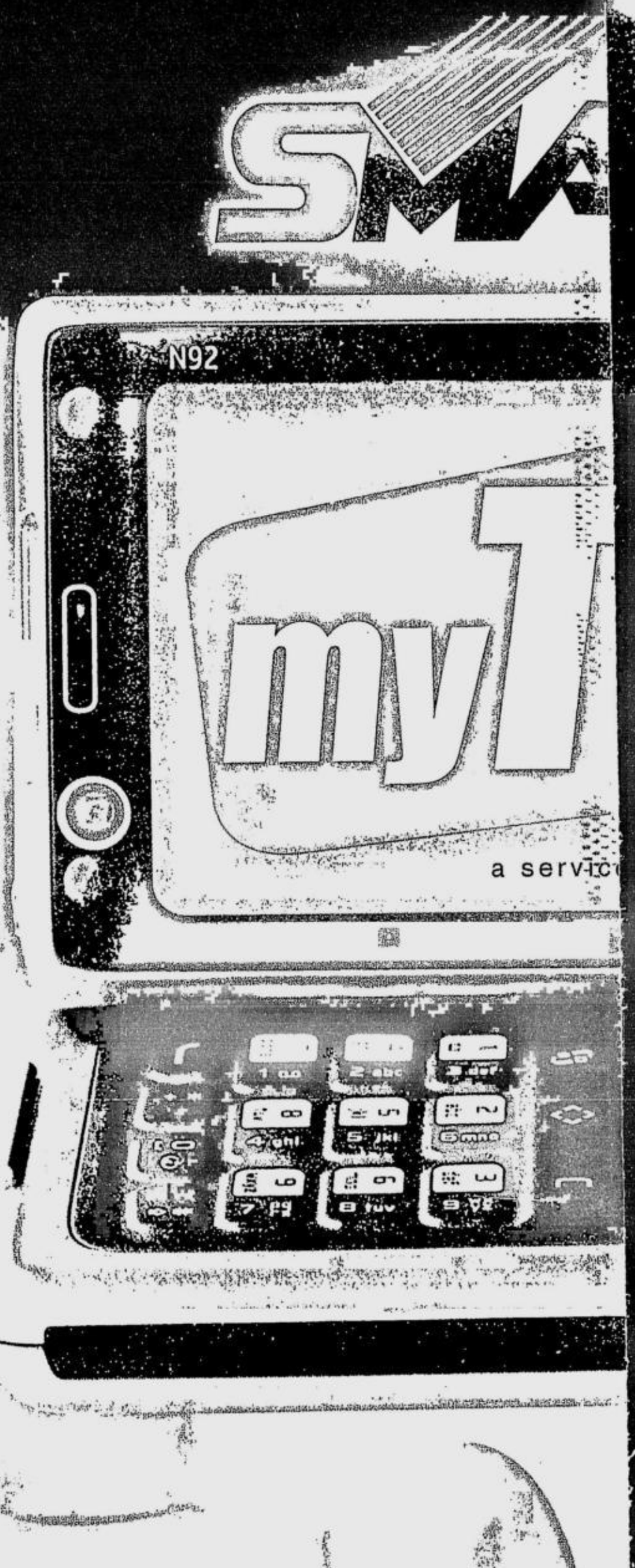

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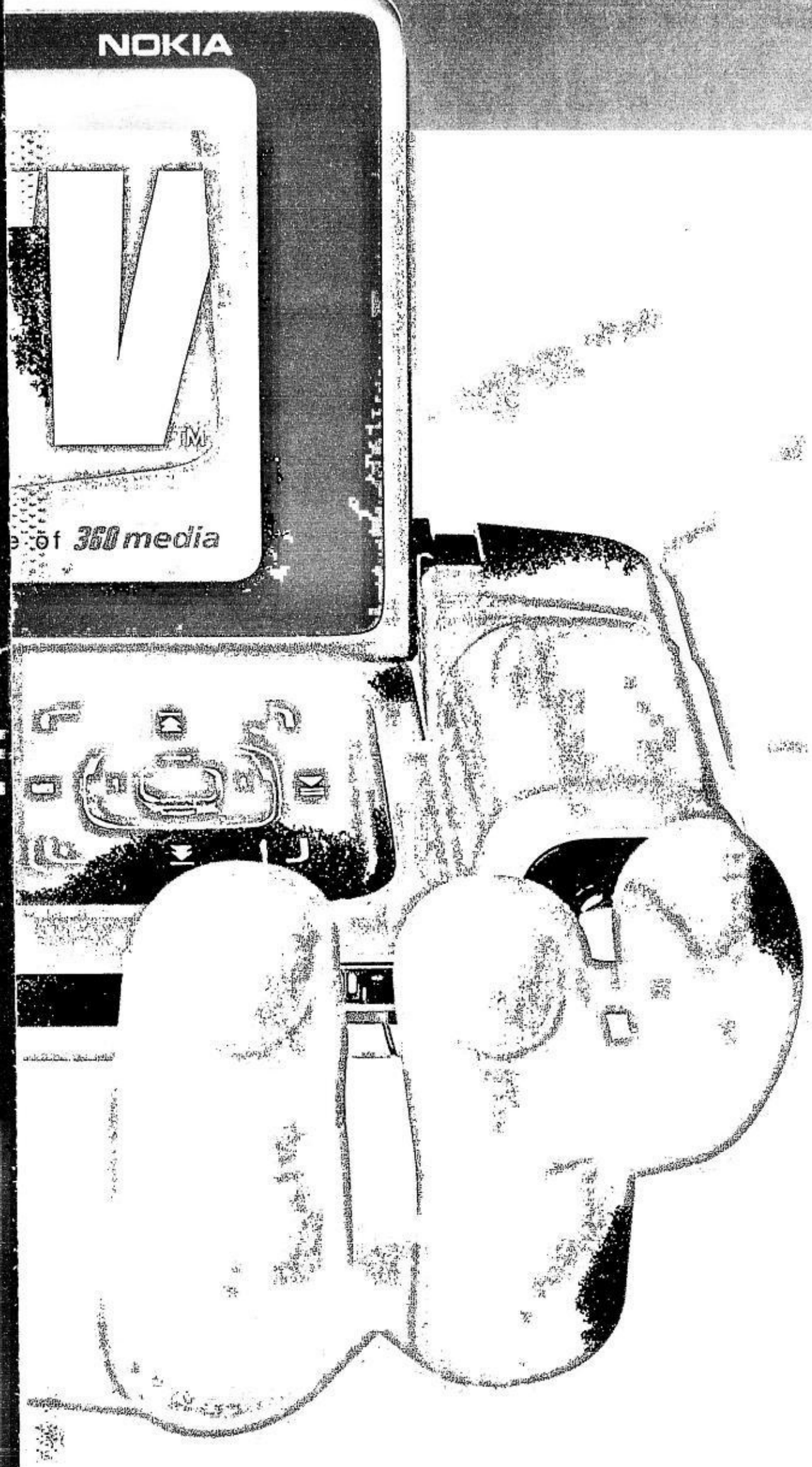

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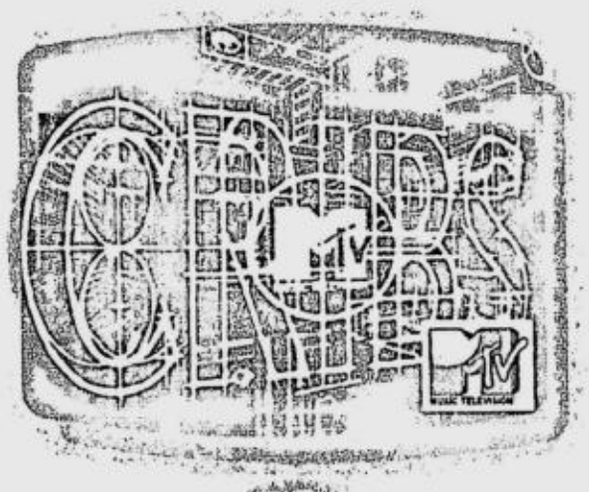

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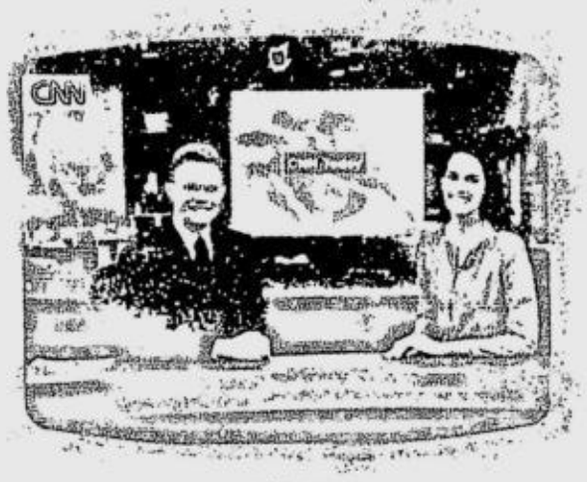

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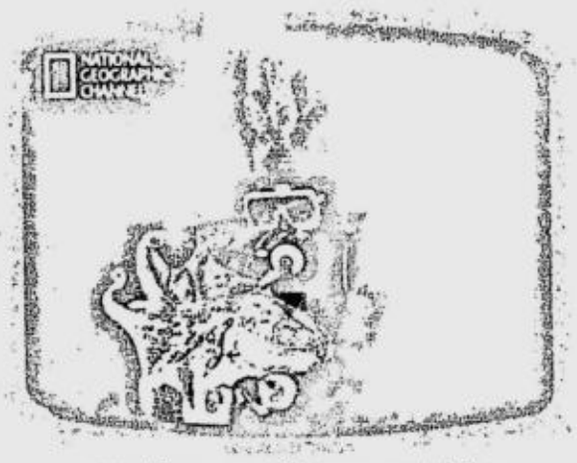

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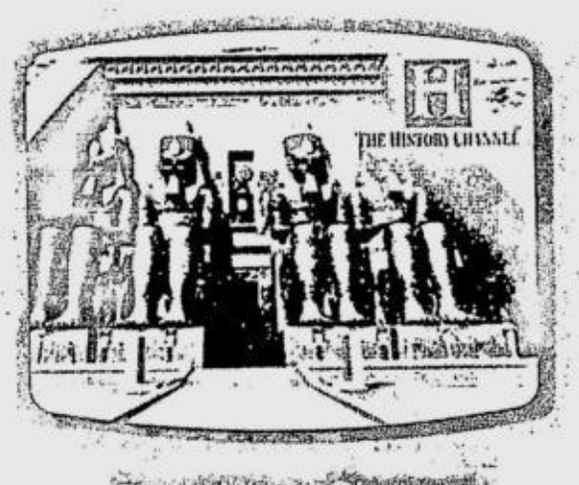

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